THE CONCEPT OF ACTION AND LEADERSHIP ACCORDING SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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DECLARATION

I, **Dr.P.ARULAPPA,** declare that this thesis entitled **"THE CONCEPT OF ACTION AND LEADERSHIP ACCORDING SWAMI VIVEKANANDA"** is the result of research work done by me under the guidance of **Dr.H.L.CHANDRASHEKARA**, Associate Professor (Retd.) Department of Post Graduate Studies in Philosophy, University of Mysore, Manasagangotri, Mysuru, Karnataka State. I am submitting this Thesis for the Post-Doctoral Degree in Philosophy to the University Grants Commission, New Delhi.

I further certify that this Thesis has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree or Diploma in this or any other University.

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Abstract

The Sanskrit equivalent for the term Action is **Karma** which is derived from the root 'Kri' which means 'to do'. That means any action done physically and mentally signifies Karma. Swami Vivekananda however uses the term 'Karma', not in the fatalistic sense, but in the sense of good and creative action.

Though every action has a motive behind it, what is required according to Swami Vivekananda is action for action sake. Man should set side selfish motive behind his work. Swami Vivekananda says, 'If we wish to help a man, never think what his attitude is towards us'. This however requires a lot of patience, restraint and perseverance. Practicing Karma in this way even for 5 days or even for 5 minutes would generate tremendous power in him, to arouse in him a moral giant like Buddha. It is only such karma that shapes man's character. A real man according to Swami Vivekananda is a character epitome, a role model to the society. There is no God apart from such a man. Man can become god by means of the character acquired by good actions. Man's Karma shapes his character and the character in turn shapes his will. Men like Buddha had gigantic wills. They acquired their wills by persistent work. What we call Karma is an aggregate of large number of smaller works. It is this sum total of small karmas that decides man's character. Man is not a hero at

one time or the other. Even the lowest of human beings becomes hero occasionally. But he alone is great according to Swami Vivekananda, whose character is **always** great. Incidental or occasional heroism is no heroism at all. Genius is the outcome of **gigantic will** developed by man's good actions through ages and ages.

The will however, requires understanding the modality of work. Man needs skill, or what Gita calls Kaushala in his action. He has to be skilful in his work in such a way as not to be overtaken by two dangers namely selfishness and ego. Working in that manner is a challenge and also a science. As Gita says, he is a Karmin in Akarma and Akarmin in Karma.

Objectives

The purpose of the present project is to expound the role of action in the man-making philosophy of Swami Vivekananda. It was Swami Vivekananda who effectively highlighted the importance of good leadership for building a firm society. Vivekananda's analysis of karma yoga and certain psychological factors involved in it, his emphasis on character acquired by persistent good action help man in the modality of action thereby making him a good leader. Swami Vivekananda's concept of action and leadership can be applicable to all fields-social, political, economic and corporate.

I have chosen Swami Vivekananda as my topic, because he is the most relevant in the present day society characterized by social, religious and technological crisis. According to him India though resourceful, is suffering because of lack of good leadership. Who is a good leader and what makes man a good leader are the points of discussion in the project. Swami Vivekananda has not only discussed the above problem in his lectures, but also has given it a new dimension, resolving it in his own way.

Hypothesis

A leader is he who is incessantly active in the society without any selfish motive, thereby influencing other members of the society.

Literature

I propose to analyze the problem on the basis of the **Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda** edited by Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, 2012.These works constitute the primary literature for my project.

Methodolology

The method adopted is mainly analytic, comparative and historical in nature. It is **analytic** in the sense that it involves classification of the materials into concepts. It is **comparative** because I want to compare Swami Vivekananda's neo- vedantic view with classical

Advaitha of Shankara. I want to show how Swami Vivekananda resembles and differs from Shankara in certain aspects. I also want to show how Upanishads have influence on Vivekananda. The method is also **historical** in the sense that I try to show how Advaitha evolved itself from Upanishadic period through Shankara's time to contemporary period.

Chapterisation

The project is proposed to be brought out in ten chapters. The **first chapter** gives an introduction to philosophy and its branches. The **second chapter** deals with the Vedantic background of Swami Vivekananda. Under this heading salient aspects of the three main schools of Vedanta namely Advaita, Vishishtadvaita and Dvaita are treated. The **third chapter** discusses the philosophy of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and his influence on Swami Vivekananda. The **fourth chapter** deals with Swami Vivekananda's critical observation on western philosophy. The **fifth chapter** explains ontological foundations of Swami Vivekananda's concept of action. It deals with Swami Vivekananda's doctrine of identity of Jiva and Shiva, or Atman and Brahman doctrine of Maya. The **sixth chapter** discusses the nature of man's ultimate goal and different means of realizing this goal. According to Vivekananda man's aim is to realize himself as identical with God and different ways of

realizing this goal are karma yoga, bhakti yoga, jnana yoga and raja yoga. In the **seventh chapter** the importance of Action and psychological factors involved in it are highlighted.. The **eighth chapter** gives an account of Swami Vivekananda's views on religion**. The ninth chapter** deals with Vivekananda's concept of action and leadership**.** A leader is he who is incessantly active in the society. According to Swami Vivekananda, to be active is to be so without desire and ego. Dexterity and consistency in one's action is what makes one a great leader in the society. A leader is not a dictator. He is selfless, realizing that he is essentially God and a part of society. He feels that if he serves the society he is serving himself. The **tenth chapter** shows that a leader is a character epitome by dint of his selfless dutifulness to the society. Here spiritual basis of Swami Vivekananda's concept of leadership is highlighted. The thesis ends up to show that Swami Vivekananda was a born leader on this criterion.

Chapter-1

INTRODUCTION

Before coming to the topic, it is necessary that we start our discussion with a general definition about Philosophy. It is difficult to define the term **Philosophy.** The term is derived from the Greek roots **Philo** and **Sophia,** which respectively mean **love** and **wisdom**. Thus the term Philosophy means **love of wisdom.** The term in the History of Western Philosophy was coined by the famous philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras (B.C.580-500).

When people praised him as the **Wisest on the Earth,** he refused to accept their title, and called himself the **Lover of Wisdom**. Thus the term Philosophy has three implications.

1. Knowledge is very vast.
2. Man can never be all-knower.
3. He should be very humble.

Initially philosophy meant an in-depth study of any discipline sensory and extra –sensory. This traditional meaning of the term continues even now in such phrases as **Doctor of Philosophy in Physics** (Ph.D**.).** However with the growth of knowledge, many sciences got separated from philosophy and became independent. Now its scope is

limited in that it makes a reasoned investigation only into the nature of Ultimate Reality.

Traditionally philosophy is divided into three branches namely **Ontology**, **Epistemology** and **Axiology**. The term **logy** is derived from the Greek root **logos** which mean **theory** or **science.** The theory which deals with the nature of Ultimate Reality is called Ontology. It is also called Metaphysics. God, soul and matter constitute the subject matter of philosophy.

The term **Epistemology** is derived from the Greek word **episteme**, which means right knowledge. The theory which deals with the nature of knowledge and means of getting it is what is called Epistemology.

The term **Axiology** is derived from the root **Axios,** which means values. The theory which deals with the nature of 3 important values namely Truth, Goodness and Beauty, accepted in Western Philosophy is called Axiology.

There are certain characteristics that differentiate Indian philosophy from western philosophy. Firstly philosophy in India was never born out of intellectual curiosity. Indian Philosophy was not only speculative, but also pragmatic in nature. It was born out of man's recognition of evil in the world and his inner urge to overcome it.

According to it only through the direct experience of truth, one can overcome this evil. In this regard Indian philosophy is more a **Darshana** or experience-based than dry speculation. According to it, although evil is a part of man's life, man can destroy it by following certain means.

Secondly it believes in the doctrine of karma. That means according to it one has to reap one's actions. The necessary corollary of this belief is the belief in rebirth. If man's action is not potent enough to reap in the present birth, he has to born again to reap fruits of his previous actions.

Because every action must have some reaction. There is no loss of effect of any action done (**krta pranasha**). Similarly there is no happening in one's life which is not the result of one's own action (**akrta abhyupagama**).

However, karma theory should never be confused with **fatalism**. Fatalism is the view that all that happens in one's life is due to some external force called **fate** and that it cannot be overcome at any cost. But the doctrine of karma does not have any pessimistic implication. It has an optimistic implication. If what happens in man's life is due to one's own action, then he has every opportunity to overcome the evil by doing good actions.

The third feature is that all our sufferings are due to what is called Avidya or Ajnana. Avidya is the ignorance of Ultimate Reality.

To summarize, according to Indian philosophy

a) Evil is a part of life and man's aim is to overcome it.

b) Evil is due to ignorance of Ultimate Reality.

c) This ignorance leads to karma which lands man into rebirth.

d) Evil can be overcome by one's good actions.

Chapter-2

VEDANTIC BACKGROUND

After giving a general philosophical background, in this chapter we are bound to be specific in giving a vedantic background of Swami Vivekananda. Vedanta is the last vedic school of classical Indian Philosophy. It is regarded as culmination of Indian philosophical thought. The term Vedanta is also applicable to Upanishads. Upanishads are called Vedanta in two senses. In the first sense, they represent the last portion of the Veda, the first 3 portions being Mantra, Brahmana and Aranyakas. In the second sense they represent the final import (Tatparya) of the Vedic teachings.

The term Vedanta is also applicable to last Vedic School. It is also called Uttara Mimamsa. Vedanta is based upon Prasthanatraya. That means it is based upon triple classics namely Upanishads, Brahma Sutra and Bhagavad Gita. Unlike other Vedic Schools which are based upon single text, Vedantic School has its foundation on these three classics. The number of classical Upanishads is 10 or 11. Brahma Sutra is the essence of Upanishadic teaching written in aphoristic form (Sutra form). It has been written by Badarayana. Badarayana has presented the Upanishadic teachings in 555 Sutras. Tradition believes that Badarayana is Vyasa. A Sutra is a brief or pithy statement. Bhagavad Gita attributed

to Vyasa has 18 chapters. These Prasthanas have many interpretations of which those of Shri Shankara, Shri Ramanuja and Shri Madhva are important. The interpretations of these 3 thinkers are respectively called Advaita, Vishishtadvaita and Dvaita. Shankara has the credit of writing detailed commentaries on all the three Prasthanas. Ramanuja wrote commentaries only on Brahma Sutra and Bhagavad Gita. However, he culled out certain statements from Upanishads and gave an exposition of them from Vishistadvaitic stand point. His expositon on Upanishadic statements is called Vedartha Sangraha. Ramanuja's commentary on Brahma Sutra is also called Shribhashya. Similarly, Madhvacharya also wrote commentaries on all 3 Prasthanas. All the 3 thinkers are not at variance as regards the existence of Brahman or ultimate reality. But they differ among one another as regards the nature of Brahman.

Advaita

The ultimate reality according to Upanishads, is called Brahman. The term is derived from the root **Brih** which means to **burst forth**. The power which bursts itself forth into the whole universe is called Brahman. According to Shankara, Brahman is Nirguna. It is non dual in nature. Chandogya Upanishad speaks of Brahman as **Ekamevadvitiya**. Here, there are three words namely **ekam**, **eva** and **advitiyam** which respectively deny Swagatha (Internal difference), Sajatiya (homogeneous

difference) and Vijatiya bhedas (heterogeneous difference). The difference within the object is what is called Swagatha Bheda. For example a plant has difference within it in terms of parts like roots, stem, branches, leaves etc. But Brahman is devoid of internal difference because it is not a whole comprising any parts. It is infinite (Akhanda).

Similarly the difference between 2 things belonging to the same class is called Sajatiya Bheda. For example the difference between 2 individuals belonging to the class of human beings is Sajatiya Bheda. However, Brahman is devoid of Sajatiya Bheda because there is no other entity resembling Brahman belonging to any class. In the same way, the difference between 2 things belonging to two different classes is called Vijatiya Bheda. For example the difference between a tree and the human being is vijatiya bheda. However, Brahman is devoid of Vijatiya Bheda also because there is no other entity which possibly belongs to the class other than Brahman. Thus there is no other entity which belongs to Brahman's class and to the class other than that of Brahman. In short, there is no other entity which resembles and which does not resemble Brahman. Nor there is difference within Brahman. That is why Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says, **there is no difference in Brahman of whatsoever kind** (Neha nanasti kinchana).

Thus Brahman belongs to its own class. It is inaccessible to thought and speech because it is without any attributes. Since Brahman is devoid of gunas it is inexplicable. Our speech can describe only such things which have qualities. Since Brahman is devoid of any guna, it is inexplicable in term of any qualities. We cannot describe Brahman in terms of any gunas. This is the reason why Upanishads describe Brahman in a negative way **neti neti** meaning **not this not this**. According to Shankara, we cannot describe what is Brahman, but we can describe what it is not.

However, Upanishads speak of Brahman as Satya, Jnana, Ananta and Ananda. According to Shankara these are not the qualities of Brahman. Brahman in not a substance possessing these qualities. Because Brahman is beyond the difference between substance and quality. Satya, Jnana, Ananta and Ananda constitute the essential nature (Swarupa Lakshana) of Brahman. That means, by Brahman we mean it is Satya, Jnana, Ananta and Ananda.

Satya or Sat implies eternal existence of Brahman. According to Shankara the entity which always retains its unchanging nature is called Satya. The entity about which our mind does not change is Sat. Sat transcends the barrier of past, present and future. It was in the past, it is in the present and it is going to be in the future. Brahman is not only pure

existence, it is also pure consciousness or **Jnana** (Chit).That means it does not depend upon any other consciousness for its existence. It is of the nature of light. All lights depend upon the light of Brahman for their effulgence. Brahman is the basis of all empirical knowledge. But it is not the object of any knowledge. It is neither knower nor known nor the means of knowing the object. It is beyond the difference between the knowing subject and the known object. The term **Ananta** signifies that Brahman is not limited to any particular space. It is infinite and all pervasive.

Brahman is also of the nature of **Ananda** or pure bliss which is not mixed with pain. It is unalloyed bliss. Brahman is the locus of Ananda. The most intimate of all the objects in the universe is our own self. The foremost object of love is ourselves. Self love is the greatest of all loves. We love ourselves for the sake of itself and not for the sake of getting another thing. If self is the greatest object of our love it means that it must be the locus of Ananda, for we cannot love anything which is not source of bliss. Since Atman and Brahman are one and the same according to Advaita, Brahman is of the nature of Ananda.

Saguna Brahman and Nirguna Brahman

Advaita also speaks of Brahman as Saguna. Brahman associated with Maya is called **Saguna Brahman**. It is also called Ishwara or God.

Saguna Brahman is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. By omnipotence we mean that God is creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe. According to Advaita, Saguna Brahman is both material as well as (Upadana karana) efficient cause (Nimitta Karana) of the universe.

Advaita differentiates between Nirguna Brahman and Saguna Brahman as follows:

1. As the name itself suggests, Nirguna Brahman is without any attributes. However, the Saguna Brahman possesses attributes. It possesses the attributes of omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence.
2. Nirguna Brahman is beyond Maya. However, Saguna Brahman is inclusive of the power of Maya.
3. Nirguna Brahman is beyond the difference between cause and effect. That means, it is neither the cause of any effect nor the effect of any other cause. However, Saguna Brahman is the cause of the whole universe. It, by the power of Maya creates, sustains and finally withdraws the universe into itself. It is both material as well as efficient cause of the universe.
4. Nirguna Brahman is devoid of threefold difference (Bheda) namely homogenous (Sajatiya), heterogenous (Vijatiya) and internal

(Swagatha). However, saguna Brahman is devoid of only first two differences namely homogeneous and heterogeneous. It has internal difference and is inclusive of two other different entities namely matter (Prakriti) and soul (Jiva).

5. Nirguna Brahman is identical with the individual soul. Shankara cites four Maha Vakyas of Upanishads namely That thou art, I am Brahman, This Atman is Brahman and Consciousness is Brahman, is support of this view. However, Saguna Brahman is different from individual self.

However,we should not give undue importance to the difference between Nirguna Brahman and Saguna Brahman. Because Advaita does not accept two Brahmans or ultimate realities. The ultimate reality is non dual in nature. Nirguna and Saguna represent two different perspectives of looking at the same ultimate reality. From the highest ontological standpoint Brahman is Nirguna. From this level, Brahman is beyond the grasp of mind and sense organs. However, we attribute certain tentative qualities to it in order to know it. In fact, there is no relationship between these qualities and Brahman. The qualities are omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence. These do not constitute the essential nature of Brahman. They are the temporary aspects by means of which we try to reach the highest state of Brahman. This is just like recognizing a specific

building on the basis of a bird sitting on it. In fact, there is no invariable relationship between the bird and the building. In the same way, the attributes and Brahman do not bear any invariable relationship. Brahman is Saguna from the empirical perspective and Nirguna from the ontological perspective. When we try to understand Brahman by means of mind and sense organs, it is Saguna .When we transcend the realm of mind and sense organs, Brahman is Nirguna.

Bondage (Evil) and Moksha

Life is characterized by the duality of pleasure and pain. This dual experience is traced to what is called Avidya. According to Advaita, Avidya or ignorance is the source of all evils or suffering. It is also called Ajnana. The function of Avidya is two fold. Firstly it conceals the reality. Secondly, it projects the unreality. The first function is called **Avarana** and the power of projection is called **Vikshepa**. Thus, Avidya is not only negative but also positive in that it conceals the reality and it projects the unreality. By virtue of these two powers, we not only **not see what is there** but also **see what is not there**. Avidya conceals the non-dual nature of reality and projects the plurality. By virtue of Avidya, we not only not realize non dual nature of reality but also see the pluralistic world. Avidya works through what is called **Adhyasa**. In Adhyasa we superimpose on ourselves what is not-self (Anatman). In other words, we

superimpose on ourselves, the physical body, the breath and the mind which are not our pure selves. This process of imposing of something on some other thing which is not that, is what is called Adhyasa. In other words mistaking a thing which is not that is Adhyasa. It is this superimposition that is the cause of our perception of difference. Wherever there is difference, there would be evil. A sense of otherness in reality is responsible for all our evils. If we think that we are body, naturally we separate ourselves from other beings and it is this sense of separateness that is the source of all evils.

Hence man's goal is to overcome this evil and the way of overcoming it is to destroy the source of this evil namely Ajnana. According to Advaita it is only Vidya or Jnana that can destroy its opposite counterpart namely Avidya or Ajnana and not Karma or action. Karma has four fold functions. Firstly, it can produce an object afresh (utpatti). Secondly, even if the object is already there, Karma can make us attain the object (prapya). Thirdly, Karma can purify an object (samskarya). Finally, it can also distort an object (vikarya).

According to Advaita, Karma is not the means of Moksha in the above senses. It cannot produce Moksha afresh because Moksha is not a new state coming into existence which was not there earlier. The object of Moksha being Brahman or Atman, is eternal and is not produced by

any activity. Similarly, Karma cannot make us attain Brahman afresh because Brahman is an entity which is already there with us as identical with our pure self. We cannot reach what is already reached. Similarly, the object of Moksha cannot be subjected to any purification or distortion because Brahman is basically unchanging and pure. In short,the fruit of Karma is transitory. Hence Karma or action cannot be the means of Moksha and knowledge or Jnana alone is the means of Moksha.

Jnana is nothing but the realization of oneself as identical with Brahman(Aham Brahmasmi). Moksha represents the destruction of Ignorance. In Moksha, the reality does not come into existence afresh. It is the realization of what is already there. A lady who is in search of her necklace elsewhere, eventually finds it to be in her own neck with the help of a guide. In the same way moksha is the case of discovery of what is already there and not the case of coming into existence afresh. Novelty is not in the object but in the knowledge of the object.

According to Shankara, man can attain Mukti, while he is in the body. This is called Jivanmukti. A Mukta may have body but in spite of possessing the body he continues to be a Jnani. Whatever he does while he during his odily existence, does not bind him. Jivanmukta's affairs can be compared to a fried seed. Just as a fried seed cannot give rise to any sprout, so too Jivanmukta's activity does not bind him to any fruit,

leading him to rebirth. Indian Philosophy recognizes three types of Karma namely Prarabdha, Sanchita and Agami. Prarabdha is the Karma which has already begun to yield its fruit. It cannot be destroyed unless it is fully experienced. For example our body is the Prarabdha Karma. Sanchita is the accumulated fruit of past actions. It is yet to be reaped. Agami is the action which we do while having our Prarabdha Sharira. The fruit of the Agami is yet to be accumulated. According to Advaita, the moment one gets Jnana, one's Sanchita and Agami will be destroyed and Prarabdha in the form of his body will continue to exist. However, the presence of the body does not obstruct one's Jnanitwa and this is the state of Jivan mukti. Whatever a Mukta does while possessing the body will serve a model to the society. His actions will not bind him, leading him to another birth. This is called Lokasamgraha in Bhagavadgita.

The Advaita Vedanta however prescribes a scheme of discipline (sadhana) that is to be undergone prior to the attainment of Jnana. The spiritual discipline comprises two steps namely Vairagya and Jnanayoga.

Under vairagya come **Nishkama-karma-yoga** and **Sadhana Chatushtaya. Nishkama-karma-yoga** is disinterested action as enunciated in the Bhagavadgita. According to Shankara although karma is not the direct means of Moksha, it can serve as an indirect means. One cannot attain liberation instantaneously. One has to achieve it step by step

through mental purification (**chitta shuddhi**) and karma yoga helps a person to obtain mental purification. After attaining mental purification one should be endowed with **sadhana-catustaya,** the four fold sadhanas.

Without sadhana-catustaya one is not eligible to inquire into the nature of Brahman, let alone attain Brahman. This point has been highlighted by Shankara in the very first aphorism of the Brahma-Sutra, **Athato Brahmajijnasa**. Here the word '**atha**' means 'thereafter'. Shankara interprets this word as '**after being endowed with sadhana-catustaya'**. The four sadhanas are:

- **Nityaanitya vastu viveka**: Discrimination between what is eternal and what is transitory.
- **Iha-amutra-phala-bhoga-viraga**: Renunciation of the sense enjoyment here in this world and hereafter in the next world (heaven).
- **Shamadi-shatka-sampatti**: Being endowed with six treasures namely shama, dama, uparati, titiksha, samadhana and shraddha. Not allowing the mind to go outside is **shama**. Control of sense organs is **dama.** Withdrawal of the sense organs from their respective sense objects is **uparati**. Not retaliating with any one is **titiksha**. Constant practice of meditation on God is **samadhana** and faith is **shraddha**.

- **Mumukshutva**: Intense desire to attain moksha.

After cultivation of detachment or **vairagya**, the aspirant is expected to go through the second step, namely **Jnana-yoga** which consists of **Sravana**, **Manana** and **Nididhyasana**. **Sravana** is the attentive listening to the teachings of the Guru. It is the study of the Upanishads under the guidance of a proper Guru who has realized the truth. The implication of this requirement is two-fold. Firstly truth is to be learnt through the study of Shruti, the revealed texts. Secondly if the study is to be fruitful mere book-learning is not of much avail. Personal interaction with a competent teacher is needed. **Manana** is reflecting over the teaching of the Guru with the help of logic. The main object of this stage is to remove the doubt that the aspirant may confront with in the process of his sadhana. This shows that Advaita accords a place for reason. The recognition of the value of analytical reflection is rather a unique feature in a doctrine which finally aims at mystic experience. **Nididhyasana** is meditation upon the identity between the individual self and Brahman. The meditation should be continued till the desired intuitive knowledge arises and that identity becomes immediate (**Aparoksha**). When the aspirant succeeds in meditation he achieves the experience of himself as identical with Brahman. This is a state which is inexplicable in terms of any categories of understanding. It is beyond thought and speech.

Vishishtadvaita

The chief exponent of Vishishtadvaita is Shri Ramanuja (1100 A.D).The basic text for the school is of two types namely Sanskrit literature which includes Upanishads and Puranas and Tamil literature composed by Vaishnava saints of tenth century A.D namely Alwars. Hence the school is sometimes called Ubhaya Vedanta. Ramanuja has written commentary on Brahma Sutra and his commentary is called Sribhashya. He has also commented upon Bhagavad Gita. His Vedartha Samgraha is an exposition of some important Upanishadic sayings. Among the later Vishishtadvaitins,Vedanta Deshika was known for his manifold talents. In the history of Vishishtadvaita, he occupies the place next to Ramanuja. He has commented on Ramanuja's Shribhashya. His **Shata dushini** is a work dedicated to the criticism of Shankara's doctrine of Maya.

Concept of Brahman

Ramanuja recognizes three ultimate realities namely Achit (matter), Chit (soul) and Ishwara (God). According to Ramanuja, although chit and achit are different from God, they are not independent of God. They depend upon God for their existence. They hold an inseparable relationship with God. This inseparable relationship is called Aprithak Siddhi. The term **Aprithak** means inseparable. Chit and achit

are related in such a way they cannot be separated from God. Nor are they absolutely identical with God. They are different and yet cannot be independent of God. Thus, Aprithak Siddhi represents a form of the relation of identity in difference (Bhedabheda).

Aprithak Siddhi is different from **Samavaya** of Vaishashikas although they have one common characteristic. According to both, the two relata are closely or inseparably related. Though the thread and the cloth can be conceived as different, they cannot be factually separated. However, there is one important difference between the two. While Samavaya is a category or Padartha according to Vaisheshika, Aprithak siddhi is not a Padartha. It is only a way of explaining the close relationship between two things.

Ramanuja further explains Aprithak Siddhi by illustrating it with the example of body -soul relation. According to Ramanuja, body is that which depends upon something for its existence, which is controlled by something and utilized by something for its purpose. In this sense, soul and matter constitute God's body. Because they depend upon God for their existence, they are controlled by God and are the instruments of God. Since matter is inert, it is the lower body of God. Ramanuja calls it Apara Prakriti. Since soul is of the nature of consciousness, it constitutes the higher body of God. Ramanuja calls it Para Prakriti.

Thus, according to Ramanuja, Brahman or reality is inclusive of God, Soul and matter, with the latter two holding inseparable relationship with God. God is the substance, soul and matter constitute His attributes. God is the same substance having two different attributes namely Chit and Achit. Since the substance is one, Ramanuja's Philosophy is Advaita. But it is not Advaita is Shankara's sense. Shankara's Advaita is Nirgunadvaita, but Ramanuja's Advaita is Saguna Advaita or Savishesha Advaita.That means, God as the substance possessing two different Visheshanas namely soul and matter is one and the same. Hence the name Vishishta-Advaita. The term Vishishta is associated with the term Visheshana which means the attribute.

Ramanuja's Advaita can be explained by giving the example of pink rose. Here, there are two entities namely rose and pink. Here, rose is the substance and pinkness is the attribute. Pinkness is different from rose because substance and attribute cannot be identical. At the same time, pinkness depends upon rose for its existence.It cannot exist independently of rose. For this reason, pinkness is neither totally external to nor totally identical with rose. Thus, rose is not a simple object as it appears to be. It is not merely rose, but it is a pink rose. In the same way, according to Ramanuja, it is the complex of substance and attribute that is real and not the entity devoid of any attribute. Brahman is a complex of three entities

namely Ishwara (God), Achit (Matter) and Chit (Soul). While Ishwara is the substance, Chit and Achit are its attributes. According to Ramanuja it is this complex whole that is unitary. Reality is not a mechanical aggregate of these three entities. It is a complex whole in which matter and soul hold an inseparable relationship with God.

Ramanuja's Advaita can be explained in another way also. In the example of pink rose, there is not one complex but there are two complexes. One complex contains rose and pink. The other complex comprises rose and roseness. Here, pink and roseness are different from each other but they belong to the same entity namely rose. In the same way matter and soul are different from each other, but they belong to the same entity namely God. It is in this sense that God having two different attributes namely Achit and Chit is **one** that the school is called Vishishtadvaita.

Comparison between Advaita and Vishishtadvaita

As already specified Ramanuja differs from Shankara in several aspects. Some differences can be highlighted as follows.

1. According to Shankara, Brahman is without any attributes. Attribute implies its difference from substance. This is against his fundamental standpoint that Reality is nonzdual.

However, according to Ramanuja. Brahman is Saguna. According to him, all knowledge points to an entity having certain attributes. We always think of or know an object as having certain attributes. Knowledge means knowledge of an object with attributes. Knowledge of an attributeless entity is inconceivable. An entity without attributes is as good as dead. To deny Brahman of attributes and yet to affirm its existence and knowledge is a contradiction. Such a knowledge cannot be possible.

2. According to Shankara, since Brahman is without any attribute, it cannot be described in terms of language. Inexplicability of Brahman is due to the fact that Brahman is without any attributes. We can describe an entity as having some attributes. Since Brahman is without any attribute, description of it is not possible.

However, according to Ramanuja, indescribability is not due to fact that Brahman is devoid of attributes. It is due to that Brahman possesses infinite number of auspicious qualities. Incomprehension is not due to the absence of any attributes in Brahman, but due to the fact that Brahman possesses infinite number of auspicious qualitie .

3. According to Shankara, Brahman is devoid of any guna whatsoever. It is neither good nor bad. It transcends the duality of good and evil.

However, according to Ramanuja, Brahman is Nirguna in the sense that it is devoid of only bad qualities. When Upanishads speak of Brahman as Nirguna, it is not that Brahman has no guna at all. It has countless auspicious qualities. When Upanishads speak of Brahman as Nirguna, it is the bad attributes that are denied in Brahman and not the good ones.

4. According to Shankara, Brahman is devoid of all the three types of differences namely Svagatha Bheda, Sajatiya Bheda and Vijatiya Bheda.

However, according to Ramanuja, Brahman is of course devoid of Sajatiya and Vijatiya Bheda, but not Svagatha Bheda. Brahman is a complex whole comprising three different entities namely Ishwara, achit and chit. The latter two hold an inseparable relationship with God.

5. According to Shankara, Brahman and Atman are identical. Shankara supports his view by citing the four Upanishadic sayings namely **That thou art** (Tattvamasi), **I am Brahman** (Aham Brahmasmi),**This soul is Brahman** (Ayam Atma Brahma) and **This consciousness is Brahman** (Prajnanam Brahma).

However, according to Ramanuja, Soul and God are not identical. They are different from each other. When Upanishads speak of the identity of self and Brahman, they use the language of identity for

explaining the inseparable relationship between self and Brahman. Self and Brahman are not absolutely identical. Self is different from Brahman and at the same time it cannot exist independently of Brahman. Self and Brahman do not have the relation of absolute identity as in Advaita, but they have the relation of identity in difference. It is this relation of identity in difference that is intended in Upanishadic saying that self and Brahman are identical.

6. According to Shankara, the world of plurality is an illusion or Maya. By Maya Shankara means, that it is different from Sat and Asat.

However,according to Ramanuja, the world of plurality is real. Ramanuja's concept of reality is inclusive of plurality. Plurality is as much real as unity.

7. While according to Shankara, Shruti or Veda alone is Pramana , Ramanuja adds to it, Agamas, puranas and Azhwars' Tamil literature also. Shankara rejects Puranas and Agamas as the Pramanas.

8. According to Shankara, the means of Moksha is Jnana and Jnana alone. By Jnana he means the realization of identity between Atman and Brahman.

However, according to Ramanuja,the means of Moksha is Bhakti. Bhakti is characterized by loving concentration on the auspicious

qualities of God. Ramanuja also refers to Jnana, but by Jnana he means the realization of oneself as different from physical body.

9. Shankara accepts Jivanmukti. Man can be a Mukta even when he is in the body. The body which is the consequence of his Prarabdha Karma, cannot have any negative impact on his Jnanitva.

However, according to Ramanuja, Jivanmukti is not acceptable. So long as one is with the body, one cannot be a Mukta in the real sense of the term. Man attains Mukti only when he sheds off all the three bodies namely gross body, subtle body and the casual body. This is called Videha mukti.

Ramanuja's Criticism of Advaitic Doctrine of Maya

Ramanuja counters Shankara's theory of Maya in the portion of Mahasiddhanta of his Sribhasya by posing seven objections. He shows certain illogicalities in doctrine of Maya. These illogicalities are called Anupapattis. Some of these can be explained as follows.

1. The first objection is called Ashraya Anupapatti. It is regarding the locus of Maya. What is the locus of Maya? Where is it? Is it in Brahman or in the Jiva? According to Ramanuja, if Brahman is the locus of Maya the question arises as to what type of relationship Maya holds with Brahman? Is it the relation of identity? Or is there any substance-attribute

relationship between Brahman and Maya? If it is the relation of identity, that means if Maya and Brahman were identical, we have to say that Brahman is Maya, which is absurd. On the other hand if there is substance-attribute relationship between Brahman and Maya, that would be contradictory to Advaitic standpoint that Brahman is attributeless. Therefore Brahman cannot be the locus of Maya. Nor can the Jiva or individual self be the locus of Maya because the very individuality of the Jiva is the effect of Maya. The effect cannot be the locus of its own cause. Hence neither Brahman nor Jiva can be the locus of Maya.

2. Some Advaitins say that Maya conceals the real nature of Brahman. If Maya conceals Brahman, it implies that Brahman's nature of self effulgence is destroyed by Maya. This is absurd.

3. Advaitins speaks of Maya as indescribable. That means it is indescribable in terms of either existence and non existence. This is also absurd. Because our experience shows that a thing is either existent or non existent. There cannot be a third alternative which is different from existence and non existence.

4. Advaitins speak of Maya as positive .That means Maya not only conceals the Reality but also is said to positively project the unreal world. It has both negative-positive features. According to Ramanuja this is also meaningless. B According to him Maya represents only negative a lack of

knowledge. It can never be positive, in the sense that it projects some other thing in the place of Brahman. Maya is nothing but fragmentary perception of reality. In so far as our partial knowledge of Brahman is concerned it is true, but it is not fully true.

5. If Maya is positive in nature, then it follows that it cannot be destroyed at all by the knowledge of Brahman. Because what is positively existing can never be destroyed.

For all these reasons, according to Ramanuja there are illogicalities or absurdities in the very Advaitic doctrine of Maya. Later Advaitins have attempted to answer Ramanuja's criticisms.

Liberation

According to Visistadaita, bondage is real and is mainly due to Avidya and Karma. Avidya is the ignorance of oneself as subservient to God and as different from matter. It makes the individual indulge in all sorts of Karma. In the state of bondage, the knowledge and power of the soul are limited.

The state of liberation in characterized by the soul’s casting of its corporeal limitations. In this state soul’sconsciousness grows to fullest expanse. The soul becomes equal to God in respect of omniscience and bliss, but it does not become identical with God. In this state,it retains its

individual identity while being united with God. Ramanuja does not accept Jivanmukti and according to him so long as one is ensnared in the mortal coil, there is no possibility of his attaining liberation. He shows inconsistency in Advaitin's maintaining simultaneously the view of the falsity of bondage as well as that of the possibility of attainment of liberation during the embodied state.

The liberation of the individual mainly depends upon God's grace. But the grace should be supplemented by the human effort. There is no contradiction in positing the necessity of both grace and effort for the attainment of salvation. God's grace is unconditional (Nirhetuka) in the sense that God does not expect any return from the devotee in being gracious to him owing to His being all-perfect. Further the necessity of self-effort is stressed only to enable the aspirant to know the worth of Moksha. It does not mean that the operation of God's grace is conditioned by man's spiritual effort.

The Sadhana of the school includes three stages namely Karma-yoga, Jnana yoga and Bhakti yoga. Karma yoga involves the performance of Karma-Vedic as well as Agamic- with the sole aim of pleasing God by way of offering the fruits of Karma to Him .Jnana-yoga constitutes knowledge of oneself as different from material body on one hand and as holding subordinate position in relation to God on the other. Bhakti-yoga

involves the fixing of the mind on God and His excellences with love and concentration.

Bhakti, however, which is based upon Upanisadic technique of Dhyana or Upasana is restricted to those who are entitled for the study of the Vedas. Therefore Ramanuja explored a means which could be adopted by all irrespective of the class, creed, and gender and that Sadhana is **prapatti** or **Saranagati**. When the aspirant finds himself totally incapable of taking to the path of Bhakti, he resorts to Prapatti. Prapatti involves giving up of all responsibilities - both spiritual and secular -to God with complete trust in His protective power (Bharanyasa and Mahaviswasa). The very incompetence for the path of Bhakti renders him competent for treading the path of prapatti. However, Prapatti should not be misconstrued as the path of inferiors. It is resorted to even by the adherents of the path of Bhakti at one stage or the other. When the adherents of the path of Bhakti find it difficult even to start the path of Bhakti they surrender to God. Or when they are struggling to proceed further in the path of Bhakti after making considerable progress in their effort, they surrender themselves to God. Thus the importance of the Prapatti is clear from that it is resorted to both as an aid (Amga) to Bhakti as well as an independent Sadhana (Svatantra) by the aspirants.

Dvaita

Like Vishishtadvaita, Dvaita also holds that Brahman is Saguna. Although it does not deny the pluralistic world as Mitya, when compared to Vishishtadvaita , its emphasis is more on plurality than unity. It represents a sort of radical pluralism. The chief exponent of Dvaita philosophy is Shri Madhvacharya(1238-1317). Like Shankara he also commented on Prasthana traya namely Upanishads, Brahma sutra and Bhagavadgita. His commentaries are known for brevity and precision. Madhva wrote a supplement to his own commentary on Brahma sutra and this supplement is known as **Anuvyakhyana**.

According to Madhva, difference (bheda) constitutes the very nature (svarupa) of the world. According to Advaita, however, difference is a relative concept .It can never be absolute. The concept of difference points to the existence of at least two entities which differ from each other. Madhva, however, does not accept this view. Difference, according to him, is not a relative concept. It need not necessarily point to the existence of two entities. It can be meaningful even in the context of single entity. To affirm the existence of an entity means its difference from other entities. To say that there is a thing 'x' implies that it is different from all other objects of the universe. In other words every object according to Dvaita has its own uniqueness and it is this uniqueness that differentiates it from other objects of the universe.

The reason for this uniqueness is the presence of a category in the object called **Vishesha**. Vishesha is one of the ten categories accepted by Dvaita. The concept of Vishesha provides metaphysical basis to the philosophy of Dvaita. What is the relationship between vishesha and the object? Normally ,the relation of substance and attribute is explained in three ways.

The **first** explanation is that substance and attribute are identical. This cannot be possible according to Dvaita. Substance cannot be same as the attribute. Because many a time we speak of the two as different. If we take the example of a flower and its color, flower is the substance and color is its attribute .Going by the first explanation we have to say flower is color, which is absurd. Because many a time we speak of color as different from flower which expresses itself in our daily usage namely

color of the flower.

The **second** explanation is that substance and attribute are different. According to Dvaita even this cannot be possible. We cannot speak of substance and attribute as absolutely or radically different .To take the same example we cannot speak flower and its color as absolutely different. If flower and color are absolutely different, we will have three terms namely flower, color and difference. .This is expressed in the phrase "Difference of the flower from its color". Now a question arises as

to what is the relationship between flower and difference? Are they identical or different? We have already seen the absurdity in the first explanation and hence flower and difference cannot be identical. Similarly they cannot be different. Because in order to explain the relation of difference between flower and color we have to posit another difference which ends in infinite regress.

The **third** explanation is that the relation between substance and attribute is that of identity and difference. Even this explanation cannot be possible according to Dvaita. Becauseit is contradictory to speak of two entities as both identical as well as different.

Hence according to Dvaita, difference cannot be the attribute of the object. It can only be the essence (Swarupa) of the object. Object and difference have a special relationship called **Tadatmya**. Here, although difference is the essential nature of the object, we think of it as different from the object because of the existence of a category called **Vishesha**. It is because of this Vishesha object and the difference appear to be different. Vishesha itself is not difference. It is the cause of difference. It is present in all objects of the universe making the object unique in their own way.

Thus difference is due to the presence of Vishesha in the object. Madhva recognizes five types of differences. In fact according to Madhva

,the very term Pra-Pancha implies that it comprises five types of differences. It is because of the presence of five types of difference in the world in which we live,t he world is called Prapancha .The five differences are:

a) Jiva -Jiva Bheda
b) jiva -Jada Bheda
c) Jada-Jada Bheda
d) Jiva-Ishwara Bheda
e) Jada-Ishwara Bheda.

In this context, it is noteworthy that the difference does not signify independence. Whenever we speak of two things as different, we do not mean that they are independent of each other. For example even though the body is different from the Soul, it does not mean that it can exist independent of soul. It depends upon the soul for its existence. In short according to Dvaita difference need not imply independence.

It is on the basis of above point, Madhva recognizes two classes of things namely Svatantra (independent) and Aswantantra or Paratantra (dependent). Madhva gives his own definition to these two terms. Whatever that does not depend upon another entity for its existence (Satta), knowledge (Pramiti) and activity (Pravritti) is Svatantra. According to Madhva, if at all such an entity as Svantantra is there, it is

Brahman (God) and Brahman alone. Logically, there cannot be two Svantantras. All other objects of the universe depend upon Brahman for their existence, knowledge and activity. Therefore they are Aswantantra or Paratantra. Infact according to Madhva, the Upanishadsic statement "All this is verily Brahman" (Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahma), does not signify the identity of Brahman and world. This statement signifies the invariable dependence of the world on Brahman. It signifies that Brahman pervading inside and outside of the world is one. Since Madhva recognises two types of entities namely Svantantra and Paratantra, his philosophy is called DVAITA (Dualism). Since he speaks of God as the only independent entity,some modern scholars designate his system as **Svatantra Advaita**.

Chapter-3

PHILOSOPHY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA (1836-1886)

Swami Vivekananda's study would not be complete without the discussion of Sri Ramakrishna's philosophy. Ramakrishna paramahamsa was Swamiji's Master. Ramakrishna's teachings were compiled by his closest disciple viz. Mahendranath Gupta (M) under the title Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna Teachings are in the form of dialogues. About this Book Aldous Huxley writes "A liberal education in humility, tolerance and suspense of judgement".

Teachings are characterized by simplicity of language. They are full analogies, similes and interesting stories. They represent a blend of ideal and commonsense – Ramakrishna's preached values that could be practiced by one and all.

According to Ramakrishna god is essentially without any qualities and form he gives an analogy of ocean. Ocean appears blue from a long distance, but is colourless when we are near it.

Similarly Pluralistic world is illusory Ramakrishna give the analogy of camphor. When camphor is burnt, nothing is left. In the same way when man gets Jnana, the world of plurality varishes.

According to Ramakrishna Saguna Brahman is equally real Brahman associated with the power of Maya is called Saguna Brahman. It is said to be the cause of creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe.

Nirguna Brahman and Saguna Brahman are two different perspectives of looking at the same reality. Basically they are one and the same. Ramakrishna does not see any difference between Kali and Nirguna Brahman. He is not bothered about the logical implications of his teaching. His teaching is based upon his personal experience. Experiential certainty is the basis of all his teachings.

Man's ultimate goal is God-realisation. But the goal cannot be achieved by pure reason. Logic takes man nowhere-R. narrates the story of a pandit who has book-learning, but does not know swimming. Only spiritual sadhana can take man to his final goal.

Three sadhanas are accepted namely Karma-Yoga, Jnana-Yoga and Bhakti-Yoga. Karma-Yoga is doing our duties without any attachment to fruits. Jnana-Yoga or Vichara-Marga involves discrimination between permanent and transitory. Here the aspirant goes on negating the not-self till he realizes self. The moment he reaches his goal all his spiritual pursuits will come to an end. Initially he denied self or Brahman in the world. Now after realization he starts seeing the self in everything. The first stage is called Anuloma. The second stage is called Viloma.

But Jnana-Yoga is very difficult for comman man. Because it involves rigorous control of mind. Bhakti is the easiest path for a lay man. Bhakti is not the fear of God. Fear creates lacuna between man and God. Bhakti is the LOVE of God.

Bhakti classified in two ways. First way is to classify it into two types viz Vaidhi and Ragatmika. Vaidhi Bhakti is worship of God in accordance with religious rites. It is ritualistic Bhakti and constitutes the initial stage. With the deepening of Vaidhi, Raga Bhakti results. It is a stage beyond all ritualistic formalities. Analogy of two friends who are very formal in their approach at first, but go beyond all formalities after they become very close to each other.

The second way is to classify Bhakti into three types viz Samartha,Samanjasa and Sadharana. Samartha loves God for God's sake. No selfish motive here. He loves God at the risk of his suffering. Samanjasa loves not only God,but also himself. It is Bhakti with selfish motive, characterised by both svartha and parartha. Sadharana loves none except himself. He is absolutely selfish. Not even a taint of Parartha, only svartha here. The most inferior type of love, which in the real sense of the term no love at all. Sadhana leads to God-realisation. God realised as one in all beings, irrespective of one's caste, creed, religion, nationality and gender.

All religions are different paths leading to the same reality. Paths are different, but the goal is same. All rivers join the same ocean. A sweet dish has same taste, from whatever side we taste it.

Bigotry criticised. A bigoted man cannot understand the greatness of other religions. He thinks that his own religion is great. He is compared to a ship which can float only on the sea and not on the river. But a small boat can adjust itself in such a way as that it can float both on the river as well as sea.

Cultivation of ethical values like discipline, humility, discrimination between right and wrong is important.

Detachment (**Vairagya**) is very important. This is not to give up the basic needs of life. Man has to acquire them in a limited quantity in righteous manner and then proceed on to the spiritual path.

Analogy of tortoise. Tortoise lives in water, but its attention is totally on its eggs hidden in the river-bank. In the same way although we are in the secular world, our attention must be on God.

Man has to realise the formless nature of God only through form. To enable concentration a form is essential. Because one cannot rise to the highest state of **Nirvikalpa** without concentration.

It is wrong to restrict God to a particular form. God has infinite number of forms. Psychologically speaking, it would be monotonous to stick on to only one form.

Ramakrishna never believed in man resorting to social reforms without himself being eligible to do it. Totally against precept without practice. According to him social reform is possible only if man is perfect at the individual level. Ramakrishna himself was very careful in involving himself in such so-called social reformations. According to him one should never involve in such activities without one becoming eligible to do them.

Sri Ramakrishna's Influence on Swami Vivekananda

The relation between Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda comparable to that of Socrates and Plato. Swami Vikvekananda took Ramakrishna's message of Religious Harmony to the world through his inspiring lectures and writings, which are brought out under the title "Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda''.

Swami Vivekananda a great scholar in philosophy, science, art and literature. A great poet, musician and a composer and above all an astounding mystic. Known for his celibate power. His writings have a tremendous power of inspiring people into constructive activities.

Undertook foreign tour twice to spread Vedantic message of his Master.His speech at Chicago in The Parliament of World Religions is very well- known. Established Sri Ramakrishna Mission in 1897.

Swami Vivekananda's Life

Vivekananda was born on the 12th January 1863 in a well-to do family of Calcutta. His early life was not very eventful. His initial education, in a sense, was all-round, because he took to physical culture almost as zealously as to intellectual learning He made his mark not only in literature and music, but also in riding, swimming and wrestling.

He had a good study of Indian scriptures as well as of Western thought. His initial mental frame-work was that of a rationalist and sceptic combined in one. In 1881, however, he happened to meet Swami Ramakrishna and that proved to be a turning point in his life. He was initially sceptical towards the teaching of his master, but after a brief period of doubt and resistance, he surrendered and accepted Swami Ramakrishna as his friend, philosopher and guide.

After the death of Ramakrishna in 1886, he undertook an extensive travel of almost the whole of India, and thereby acquainted himself with the social and economic conditions of the country. He came to feel that India, in spite of its rich spiritual heritage and very strong cultural history, had not been able to root out poverty, weakness and social evils. He

strongly felt the need of bringing about a spiritual revolution, which, he also realised, required a very strong spiritual leadership.

At that very time he came to know that the Parliament of Religions was going to meet at Chicago He decided to go there and to participate in the meet. What happened there is today a household story, but this was a fact that the Parliament of Religions enabled Vivekananda to assume the spiritual leadership of the Indian people.

He travelled extensively even in foreign countries and learnt about their good things. After his return, he founded the Ramakrishna Ashram at Belur, near Calcutta and started, with great vigour, the work of social reform and service. In 1899, he undertook a second journey to the West and breathed Contemporary Indian Philosophy his last on the 4th of July 1902, leaving behind an institution and a host of disciples to carry on the good work he had started.

The Influences that shaped his Philosophy Vivekananda's philosophy arises from the awareness of the social, religious and economic conditions of the Indian masses. He had also a realisation that at least some of the social evils were due to the orthodoxy and superstitions prevalent in the society of the time. He had a deep conviction that this was due to a loss of faith in spiritual values. Consequently, he aimed at, what could be called, a spiritual awakening

and accepted with gratitude whatever he could learn from faiths and disciplines emphasising the ultimacy of spiritual values.

The deepest influence upon his thought is obviously of Ancient Hindu Philosophy especially of the Vedanta. It can safely be said that to a very great extent, Vivekananda also is a Vedan tist. The main body of his thought is derived from the Hindu Scriptures from the Upanisads and the Vedanta. His basic belief in the essential unity of everything, that is, in the comp letely monistic nature of reality, owes its origin to the Vedanta.] His doctrine of Maya, again, is derived from the same source. The distinction between an empirical point of view' and 'a transcendental point of view that he so often makes and to which he refers time and again in order to solve certain appa rent contradictions of his thought, is also borrowed from the Vedanta. It is true that Vivekananda always emphasises the need of re-interpreting Vedanta in accordance with the demands and needs of the time; in fact, his philosophy itself is an attempt in that direction, but this remains a fact that some of the basic ideas of the philosophy of Vivekananda are derived from ancient Hindu philosophy-specially the Vedanta.

In a certain sense, Vivekananda is influenced by Buddhist philosophy also. There are at least three ideas in Vivekananda's philosophy for which he remains indebted to Buddhist thought. The first

and the foremost is the idea of 'mass-liberation that Vivekananda envisages; it has a clear similarity with the Buddh istic ideal of Bodhisattva. Secondly, Vivekananda is impressed by the Buddhistic assertion that the raft with the help of which one crosses a river in storm, should be left for the use of others. Buddha himself, even after attaining Nirvana, kept on roaming Swami Vivekananda about and helping others in their struggles against suffering. Vivekananda frankly recognises the worth of such humanitarian and altruistic work. His own missionary zeal for service is in fluenced by this. Thirdly, some of the Buddhistic ideals, like Samyak Karmanta and Ajiva have also inspired Vivekananda a great deal.

Along with these Indian influences, he also carried, on his thought, the influence of Christianity. He was impressed by the strength of character, the soul-force that the man of the Cross possessed. He could see that it required a supreme spiritual strength to forgive the oppressor even in the midst of acute physical suffering. From Christianity, therefore, Vivekananda takes up the ideal of service and love. His conviction that man contains within him the spark of Divinity and his optimistic belief in the possibility of man's redemption contain elements that greatly resemble the Christian notion of the Kingdom of God.

There were certain other influences too. For some time he was under the influence of Brahmo Samaj, and, it can be said that his strong feelings against the prevalent orthodox and superstitious rites were generated under that influence. He also seemed to be influenced by the personality of Dayananda Saraswati. It can be said that Dayananda's emphasis on the indeterminate nature of reality and his practical insistence on the quality of fearlessness had left a deep mark on Vivekananda also. Then, there was the Gita, which, with its emphasis on 'selfless work', was a source of constant inspiration to Vivekananda.

But the profoundest influence, in the light of which every other influence was remodelled and shaped, was that of his master—Swami Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. In fact, the story of the life of Vivekananda would have been entirely different, had he not come under the influence of Ramakrishna. It is said that Ramakrishna brought about a spiritual transformation in the personality and the mental make-up of Vivekananda. Swami Nikhilananda, speaking about this, says, "It was his Master who had taught him the divinity of the soul, the non duality of God-head, the unity of existence and one more great thing that is the universality or harmony of all different religions". It is true that Ramakrishna initiated him to spiritual discipline and meditation.

Ramakrishna had a great impact on Swami Vivekananda's life. This is testified to by his two lectures delivered by him in Newyork and England. These lectures are compiled in the 4th vol. of the Complete Works, under the caption **My Master.**

The special aspects of R that impressed SV are as follows.

1. Ramakrishna's extra ordinary spiritual power and great **certainty** with which he spoke about his spiritual experience. It must be remembered that **Certainty** marks the foremost feature of mystic experience (See **Varieties of Religious Experience** by **William James**).
2. Communicative Speciality- Simplicity of language – Descending to common man's level in order to enable him to understand deep truths of life-Uses even rustic language. Teachings studded with similes, analogies and stories. This shows that R had a great concern for common man, which impressed Swami Vivekananda a great deal.
3. Ramakrishna never taught what could not be practiced by man. He preached the ideals which could be practiced by one and all. Teachings represented a blend of ideals and common sense.
4. Ramakrishna never preached anything which he did not practice in real life. He bore a great impression on the listener not only

because of his simplicity of language but also because he spoke what he practiced in his real life. His teachings were never a jargon but constituted a heart to heart communication.

5. Ramakrishna had equal respect to all religions. Never negative in his treatment of other religions. He never criticized or destroyed man's faith in any religion, be it Hinduism, Christianity or Islam. SV says, "I have spent my life with him for several years, but never have I seen him any creed or religion''. According to Swami Vivekananda only such a man can be a Guru. Ramakrishna was not communal. By religion he meant spirituality and God realization. According to him all religions are the paths to the same goal viz. God.
6. Ramakrishna's simplicity of character another important. He never had even a taint of feeling that he was a guru or a godman. He owed the credit of all his worth to his Goddess. He said, "If at all good words are coming from me, it is all because of my Mother, Kali''.

Chapter-4

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of the present chapter is not to study Swami Vivekananda as a spokesman either of eastern philosophy or western philosophy. Whatever be his geographical origin, it cannot be forgotten that Swami Vivekananda was a spokesman of Truth. Thus Swamiji has to be studied from his own standpoint, not by framing him under any particular philosophy or isms.

However this is not to overlook western philosophical concepts, Swamiji makes use in his exposition of thought. It must be known that Swami Vivekananda was a great student of Western philosophy and many of the remarks he makes on Western philosophy in his works are of greatest philosophical importance. In this chapter some observations on his remarks on Western philosophy are made.

Substance and Qualities

One of the chief problems of philosophy is the problem of substance. Is there any permanent substance holding different qualities? What is the relation of substance with qualities? Some philosophers deny the very existence of permanent substance. What we see, feel and think is only the qualities behind which we cannot see or know anything. The so -

called substance or object is thus a conglomeration of qualities. In the European terminology, it is only a bundle of sensations or bunch of qualities. This is the view held by Hume, a British as also Vijnanavadins.

But there is another view accepted by Herbert Spencer, which affirms the existence of a permanent substance having qualities. Changing qualities without an unchangeable substance is inconceivable. Here the reality has two aspects viz the changing one and an unchanging one. This concept of permanency is extended to the doctrine of soul also. The argument is based on the doctorine of self identity or memory that **I am I.** I of everyday is the I of today. I of today is the I of tomorrow. That means inspite of all the changes occurring in the body, I continue to be the same I. There is also another way of putting the argument. Man makes a series of expressions as for example "I do", "I go", "I dream", "I Sleep" etc. All these activities differ. But the common factor **'I'** is constant. Therefore I is something permanent which differs from actions which can be attributed to body.

However according to Swami Vivekananda the assumption of an identical substance behind the qualities cannot be substantiated. The argument from memory is weak. We cannot device self-identity from the fact of our remembering the past. We forget many things rather our whole of our past. **If memory affirms the existence of the self**, **forgetfulness**

should deny it. More over a lunatic may think of himself not as himself, but as something else. Thus argument from memory cannot establish a permanent self as different from body.

Similarly the argument from common factor, as we can put it, is also unconvincing. It is just mere a play of words. The I and the activities at the outset may be separate, but in thought they cannot be so. For instance when I eat, I cannot imagine myself as separate from eating.

Swamiji sees the problem resolved in Advaita. It is true that we cannot go beyond the perception of changing qualities. However change can be meaningful only in the context of something unchangeable. Phenomena to put in Kantian terminology, would be meaningful only in the noumenal context. But this is not to accept dualism of both phenomenon and noumenon, change and unchange. To accept both is logically contradictory. Only one should exist. When we perceive the snake there cannot be rope and when we perceive the rope there cannot be snake. So the only postulation that can be made is that there is only one which appears as something else as the phenomenal world, and that one is Absolute.

Creation

Swami Vivekananda deals with the same problem from a different angle viz. the problem of creation. Absolutists believe in the existence of

Infinite expressing or manifesting itself as finite. While dealing with this problem, Swamiji makes a passing remarks on some German philosophers. According to these philosophers the Infinite is trying to express itself. The manifestation will become higher and higher until it reaches its perfection.

But Swamiji branding the theory as 'peculiar', questions the logicality of it. He sees absurdity in limited becoming unlimited. How can one become its opposite? Perfection means infinite and manifestation means finite (limited by space, time and causation). How can the same infinite be both infinite and finite. It is as good as saying unlimited limit, which is self-contradictory. According to Swami Vivekananda, such a theory may please children, but it is poisoning their minds with lies.

Schopenhaur

Swamiji makes a similar criticism on the German philosopher Schopenhaur who held that the Will is the cause of the universe. Schopenhaur tried to interprete the upanishads, but in his interpretation, he wrongly identified Absolute with Will.

According to Swamiji, Will is nothing but motor nerves. When sensations are carried to the brain, certain reactions take place in it. These reactions express themselves as "Do this", "Don't do that". It is these reactions that are called Will. In the absence of motor organs there cannot

be any reaction. In short in the absence of the motor organs there cannot be Will at all. Not only that, recent experiments have shown that lower creatures could live without these motor nerves.

Moreover from the philosophical angle, Will is something changeable. But the Absolute is beyond change. Swamiji cites the example of man moving the chair. I move a chair and I say that my Will is the cause of this movement. But this Will manifests itself in the form of muscular motion, which in turn is transferred to the chair. The same movement is responsible for the movement in heart and lungs. In other words, in the latter case, the movement is involuntary, whereas in the former case it is voluntary. It is voluntary because it involves in **conscious** effort to do the required thing. In other words, Schopenhauer according to Swamiji, is ignoring the importance of consciousness involved in a wilful act. Therefore it is wrong to identify Will with the Absolute.

Tabula rasa

The fourth important view tackled by Swamiji is the Lockean view that mind is an empty tablet. According to the British Philosopher, all knowledge comes from outside and mind to begin with is an empty tablet (Tabula rasa). Knowledge is written anew on it from outer sensations.

Swamiji takes a strong exception to the above view. According to him, there must be something in man's mind to start with. Without a fund of knowledge already existing in his mind, any new knowledge is impossible. If a child comes to this earth with an empty mind, it can never acquire knowledge. Because there is nothing in the mind in terms of which it can interpret the new experience. Knowledge is therefore **pigeon-holing** one's experience with the one already existing in one's mind.

According to some Western philosophers child of course is born with knowledge in its mind. But this knowledge does not belong to it. It is transmitted to the child by its forefathers. Knowledge is hereditary transmission. According to Swamiji, however, this theory is incomplete. This theory can expalin only the physical side of the individual. It ignores the role of environment in influencing man. Many causes produce the same effect. But it must also be remembered that we make our own environment.

Utilitarianism

Similarly Swamiji questions the ethical doctrine of utilitarianism, put forward by Bentham and Mill. According to him it cannot properly explain the ethical relations of men in the society. We cannot derive ethical laws from mere consideration of utility. Social relationship is

more than utilitarian motive. Without a supernatural sanction or the perception of the super conscious, there can be no ethics. Ethics must have a spiritual foundation. Ethics is meaningful only in the context of spirituality which represents man's struggle towards the attainment of Infinite. Utilitarian sees impracticality in such a struggle towards a spiritual goal and he separates ethics from spirituality. But Swamiji sees absurdity in such a view. Ethics itself is not an end. But it is a means to an end. This end is not secular but a spiritual one. This is also a criticism of Kant's theory of Categorical Imperative, the theory that advocates duty for duty's sake, which ignores man's purposive nature. Thus utilitarianism does not answer the question why of ethics, and the concept of duty is too narrow. In this context, Swamiji does not spare even confucius, the Chinese philosopher, who said, "Let us take care of this world, and when we have finished with this world, we will take care of the other world". Swamiji makes a remark on this statement thus; "It is very well that we should take care of this world. But if too much attention to the spiritual, may affect a little of our practical relations, too much attention to the practical hurts us both here and hereafter. It makes us materialistic. For, man is not to regard nature (world) as his goal, he should regard something higher as his goal.

These are some of swamiji's remarks on Western philosophy. He was a great critique of Western Philosophy, but at the same time we should remember that he was not critical of Western Philosophy.

Chapter-5

ONTOLOGY

Ontology is a branch of philosophy which deals with the nature of Ultimate Reality. It is also called Metaphysics. It deals with the following questions.

Is this world given to our perception real or unreal? If it is real, does it have any cause? If it has cause, what is its nature? Does it posses any specific attributes? Or is it attributes less? If it has attributes, what sort of attribute does it have? Is it sentient or inert? Is it one or many? What is its relationship with us? Are we one or different? That means is the cause of the universe identical with or different from the self?

Now we study SV's ontology in the light of these questions. Swami Vivekananda's ontology provides a theoretical background to his Practical Vedanta.

According to Swami Vivekananda, only Advaita can give us satisfactory answers to the above questions. Swami Vivekananda could find scientific answers to the above questions only in Advaita Vedanta because it explains the world of particulars or difference in the light of Universal or Unity. According to him Brahman is the unitary principle which philosophically explains the universe known for its manifoldness.

From the beginning of man's history, the question that has haunted his mind is, whether he survives after death? Is there any existence beyond the corporeal existence? Materialists give a negative reply to this question.

There is also another answer to this question. According to nihilists, there is nothing in the past, present and future. The concept of permanency itself is a myth. What we call a **thing** undergoes incessant change. There is nothing like a permanent entity. The so-called everything represents a series of different objects belonging to different moments. **Every Thing is Momentary.** This theory is called **Kshanabhangavada** and is attributed to later Buddhism.

But according to SV nihilism is practically impossible. It is easy to talk about nihilism.

But it is practically difficult to be a nihilist. Total denial of everything is impossible. We can deny anything as false only with reference to something which is true. Even if a person dares denying everything, he has to be there as the denier. Self-denial implies self-affirmation.

Thus the limitation of the above view leads us to another view. According to this view there is a permanent entity behind this evanescent life. According to this view, Reality survives the death of corporeal body. Basically man is perfect. Somehow he has descended

himself to the lower level. He is trying very hard to come out of this corrupt stage.

According to Swami Vivekananda all religions of the world accept the permanent existence of Ultimate Reality. The idea of permanency is there in all religions of the world in one way or the other. We cannot set aside this idea as superstitious. If religion is superstitious, science is no exception to it. Ancients quote Christ, Buddha to justify their views. But the moderns quote Huxley, Tyndal, Darwin to justify their views. Swami Vivekananda calls this tendency of quoting scientists Scientific Superstition.

It is in this context Swami Vivekanada subjects Darwin's theory of Evolution to severe criticism. According to him the concept of evolution is meaningless without reference to devolution. Ascent without descent is inconceivable. It was this criticism that gave an impetus to Aurobindo to formulate his theory of evolution. According to Aurobindo evolution and devolution constitute circular process.

Darwin's theory also rises the question as to how man came into existence all of a sudden. Its explanation of evolution is unconvincing. Nothing can come out all of a sudden, without its being there already in some way or the other. Even according to science the amount of manifestation of energy should be equal to the amount of energy present

in an object. An object cannot unfold more energy than what it already contains in it. If a human being has evolved from a minute thing he has to be there in that minute object in some way or the other. Nothing comes out of nothing.

For all these reasons, we can come to the conclusion that ENERGY constitutes the stuff of the whole universe.

This energy cannot be inert. According to some energy is inert. The inert energy is the source of the whole universe. Even consciousness has its source in inert matter. This theory is called Epiphenomenalism. Swami Vivekananda criticizes this theory as follows.

If consciousness is the effect of inert matter, what is the cause of matter? What transforms matter into consciousness? Did matter become soul on its own? Or did this transformation occur through some other force?

Moreover two selves cannot be identical in nature. How can we explain the plurality of selves?

We don't find satisfactory answers to the above questions. The theory of epiphenomenalism has reversal thought. That means according to this theory matter comes first and consciousness comes next. But according to SV this is not correct. According to him energy is of the

nature of consciousness and it is this energy that is the cause of the whole universe. Basically SV is an idealist. That means according to him consciousness constitutes the fundamental stuff of the whole. In fact there is no such entity as matter. What we call matter is only an extremely active state of energy. Matter is only solidified energy.

It has no body and mind both of which are physical or corporeal in nature Since it has no body and mind it is immutable or changeless. Body is the result of the combination and separation of physical elements and hence is bound to die. Similarly is unsteady and it always changes into pleasure and pain. However Swami Vivekananda sees irrelevancy in the energy undergoing change. Change according to him is only in the parts not in the whole similarly there cannot be evolution in energy. Evolution implies the movement from imperfection to perfection. But there is no evolution in energy because it is already perfect. Enlargement of the hole in the screen gives the impression that the object outside the screen is enlarging. But this is wrong. In fact the enlargement belongs to the screen which conceals the object and not to the object as such. Similarly expansion is in our vision of energy or Atman and in the Atman as such.

Energy is beyond space and time. In fact space and time are relative. They do not have any absolute existence. They existence only in our mind. They do not have any existence outside our mind. In this

respect they are purely subjective in nature. As a philosopher (Kant) puts it, they are the ways of looking at the things. Thus what is ultimately real is not Atman in space and time, but Atman beyond space and time.

Since Atman or energy transcends space and time, it is beyond the limitations of past, present and future. That means it has no beginning and end.

Since it is beyond temporality it is not subjected to the law of causation. Causation means sequence of two events. But energy is neither the cause of any incident nor itself is the effect of any cause.

It can not be know known in the ordinary sense of the term. In ordinary knowledge there is objectification. Here we try to know something as different from ourselves. But there is no objectification in Atman.In this context Swami Vivekananda quotes Yajnavalkya,'' When everything is the knower himself, how can there be any such thing as the known object?''

There is no duality in energy. The real nature of man is Advaita.

Doctrine of Maya

Maya is an important concept in Advaita vedanta. The whole vedantic mansion stands on the foundation of the concept of Maya. According to Swami Vivekananda maya is such a difficult concept to

understand that it may require many lives for a man to grasp it. No philosopher has solved the Advaitic problem of maya so efficiently as SV has done. Swami Vivekananda's approach towards the problem is both scientific as well as populist. In his exposition of maya Swami Vivekananda is both a tremendous vedantin as well as a extraordinary scientist.

Broadly the term maya has two connotations. It signifies the power of God to manifest himself in manifold ways. Secondly it also signifies that the world is a hallucination.

But according to Swami Vivekananda it was only during Shankara's time the doctrine came to acquire clear shape. According to Swami Vivekananda maya is not an artificial doctrine fabricated to explain the nature of the universe. **It is a fact.** What we are and what we perceive around us is maya. In expounding the the doctrine of maya Swami Vivekananda is not only reflecting traditional concept of maya in advaita vedanta, but also giving it a new dimension.

According to Swami Vivekananda maya is tremendous. Because it cannot be explained in terms of **why** and **how**. In fact the very question of Why and how is itself irrelevant in maya. We have but to accept it. Maya is a fact in several senses.

Firstly it is a fact in the sense that world is relative. That means this world is that of space, time and causation. We know the world as existing in space and time, and as subject to causal law. According to Swami Vivekananda it is futile to explore the secret of the universe by the so-called scientific or objective method. Because what is regarded as objective is actually subjective in that it depends upon the knowing mind and the sense organs. Moreover, in the course of our perceiving the world, we are distorting the very nature of the world. The very perception of the object affects the nature of the object. Therefore we are not perceiving the world as it is, but we are perceiving it as we want to see it.

Secondly maya is a fact in the sense that life is a paradox. Life is full of hopeless contradictions. We are born with optimism, but in old age we become pessimistic. Our life oscillates between one extremity of optimism and another extremity of pessimism. Pleasure is inclusive of pain and vice versa. Man cannot create happiness elsewhere without subjecting himself to pain. Similarly he cannot create pain elsewhere without himself being happy. If he is happy at one place, he is creating indirectly suffering elsewhere.

Thirdly maya is a fact in that man longs for life. There is a sense of longing for life in man and that is maya. We see our neighbours dying and yet we think that we are permanent on this earth and this is maya. Blind belief in the transitory is maya. We do not know why want to live.

Lastly maya signifies man's struggle for attaining that which is not attainable. Swami Vivekananda says" We are after golden fleece. We know that only one in 20 million will get it. Still we run after it and that is maya".

Thus maya is a fact in several senses. It is both a fact as well as a problem. None is successful in solving the riddle of maya. More man efforts to overcome maya more he becomes entangled in it. Swami Vivekananda gives two examples to illustrate this point. Maya is like an old building. More we try to repair the building at one place, more it becomes damaged at other place or maya can comparable to rheumatic pain. If we try drive the pain from the brain, it will attack the body. If we try to it from the body it will attack our limbs. Hence maya is undefiable. It is for this reason Swami Vivekananda calls maya terrible. Swami Vivekananda attaches two predicates namely **tremendous** and **terrible** to maya. It is tremendous because it is inexplicable in terms of **why** and **how**. Similarly it is terrible because it is very difficult for man to overcome it.

But this is not trt give up our effort to overcome the maya. According to Swami Vivekananda **we are not born as helpers of nature (maya), but we are born as competitors of nature**. Ours is not merely a sensory life. Our life is characterised by feelings, thoughts and ambitions.

Swami Vivekananda gives a wonderful definition to the term **life. Life is characterised** by man's continuous struggle against the laws of nature and towards the attainment of perfection.

In short there is a great entity which is beyond maya. If we struggle to attain that entity we are sure to overcome the power of maya. According to Swami Vivekananda **Man is sure to overcome this power one day or other**. Man is sure to achieve victory over nature-whether it is internal or external one day or the other. Thus Swami Vivekananda who began his exposition of the doctrine of maya in a pessimistic note turns out to be ultimately tremendously optimistic.

The Absolute and Iswara

Normally by god we mean that he is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. By omnipotence we mean that God is the creator, sustainer and destroyer at the whole universe. Taittiriya Upanishad defines God has that sustenance from which the whole universe orginates, in which it sustairs itself and into which it finally merges itself.

This is the personal concept of God. That means in existence of God implies the existence of Soul and Matter. All the three crititieses namely God, Soul and Matter are real, with soul and matter being invariably depending as God for their existence. Thus personality of God does not imply that the universe known for its diversity is illusion and

that the soul is absolutely identical with God. All the three entities namely God, Soul and Matter are the real and different from one another. With soul and matter invariably depending upon God for their existence.

To this qualities Swami Vivekananda adds the qualities of Mercifulness and Love. The above qualities are said to be majestic qualities of God as it is sadi in Vishistadvaitas Vedanta. They are the qualities of Paratva. But love or all-mercifulness is the attribute of Saulabhya, the qualities of easy-accessibility. Thus according to Swami Vivekananda, the concept of Bhakthi affirms that god is personal. By personality we mean the reality of the universe of soul and matter, which is absolutely subservient to God.

Now a questions arises. A there two Gods impersal God which is the negatively described as well, new and which is pure the Existence-knowledge-Bliss of the philosopher, and the God of the bhaktas? Swamy Vivekananda replies to this question in the negative. According to him it is the same Sat-chit-ananda who is also the God of Love, the impersonal and personal in we are and the same Brahman, as the unity or Absolute, is too much of an abstraction to be loved and worshipped. So the bhakta chooses the relative aspect of Brahman, namely Iswara, as his object of love and worship. Iswara is the highest manifestation of the Absolute Reality, or in other words, “the highest possible reading of the Absolute by the human mind”.

This does not make Iswara a lower, reality or Unreal. When it is said that Iswara is the highest reading of the Absolute by the human mind, it should be clearly understood that it does not in the least imply any idea of Iswara being an inferior reality or a product of anthropomorphic subjectivism. ‘According to Swamyji’s we cannot have any idea of Brahman which is not anthropomorphic, Bhagawan Kapila, the greatest psychologist the world has ever known, demonstrated ages ago that human consciousness is one of the elements in the make-up of all the objects of our perception, internal as well as external. Beginning with our bodies and going up to Iswara, we may see that every object of our perception is this consciousness plus something else, whatever that may be. This unavoidable mixture is what we ordinarily think of as reality. Indeed it is, and ever will, all of the reality that is possible for the human mind to know. Therefore to say that Iswara is unreal, because He is anthropomorphic, is sheer nonsense. It sounds very much like the “occidental squabble” as Swami Vivekananda puts it on idealism and realism, which fearful-looking quarrel has for its foundation a mere play on the word “real”. The idea of Ishvara covers all the ground, denoted and connoted by the word real.

It should, however, be noted that the philosophers of the pure bhakti school are not in full agreement with this interpretation of Iswara as the highest reading of the Absolute by the human mind. This comes out clearly in their discussion of the condition of the liberated souls. In

discussion of Vyasa's Sutras on this subject, all bhakti schools agree that such liberated souls, freed from all the limitations of ignorance, get infinite power, knowledge and bliss. But they retain their distinction from Iswara eternally, because Iswara is distinguished from them by the essential attribute of the power of creation and direction of the world systems. No liberated jiva can have these quality, as he is subordinate of Iswara in all conditions of ignorance and liberation.

Acharya Ramanuja's however, is a philosophy which accepts the unity of all existence, but to all practical purposes its implication is dualistic. The liberated one attains to extreme sameness Sadrishya to God and all his desires are realized. This means only such liberated ones, enjoy the unobstructed perception of Brahman, but they do not however possess the power of ruling the universe. For, ruling the universe is the uncommon attribute, the differentium, which distinguishes Iswara from everything, including the liberated jivas. So although the system of Ramanuja admits the unity of the total, within that totality of existence, there are, according to him, eternal differences. Therefore, being dualistic to all practical purposes, it is very easy for Ramanuja to keep the distinction between the personal soul and the personal God.

A possible reconciliation

There is thus a clear-cut difference in the conception of Iswara between the bhakti and the Advaitic schools. A reconciliation however can be attempted. Besides, it has to remembered that to keep their separateness from or be one with Brahman, is within the choice of the jivas. 'Those who aspire to retain their individuality even after liberation and to remain distinct will have ample opportunity of realizing their aspirations and enjoying the blessing of the qualified Brahman. These are they who have been spoken of in the Bhagavata Purana thus, "O king, such are the glorious qualities of the Lord that the sages whose only pleasure is in the Self, and from whom all fetters have fallen off, even they love the Omnipresent with a love that is for His love's sake".Samkhyas also have a similar theory that some liberated jivas become absorbed in prakriti to come out in a next creation as the Governors of new world systems. Even these mukta souls cannot be equal to God, though their will might be one with His. But "Those who atain advaitik state there is neither creation, nor created, nor creator, there is neither knower, nor knowable, nor knowledge there is neither I, nor thou, nor he, where there is neither subject, nor object, nor relation. "This being the call who is seen by whom?" Such persons have gone beyond everything they have reached a state "where words cannot go nor mind". As he is said in Taittiriya, They have gone to that State which the Shrutis

declare as “Not this, not this”. But for those who have not reached this state, there will inevitably remain the triune vision of the one undifferentiated Brahman as nature, soul, and the interpenetrating sustainer of both – Ishwara. So, when Prahlada in Bhagavata got himself, he found neither the universe nor its cause. All was to him one Infinite, undifferentiated by name and form. But as soon as he remembered that he was Prahlada there was the universe before him and with it the Lord of the universe – “the Repository of an infinite number of blessed qualities”.

Hence Bhakti is meaningful only in personal contest. if can be directed towards Brahman, only in His personal aspect’. Thus according to Swami Vivekananda above philosophy of Iswara ‘maintains all the hopes and aspirations of the dualist intact, and at the same time propounds its own solution to the problem in consonance with the highest destiny of divine humanity’.

Chapter-6

MOKSHA AND MOKSHA SADHANA

Mysticism

In the introductory chapter we spoke about Indian Philosophy as Darshana, Philosophy of direct experience or mystic experience. In the current chapter we are bound to deal with the problem of mysticism. Whichis very important in the philosophy of religion. The term has been interpreted variously by various scholars. Some take it as mysterious phenomenon or occultism which is said to defy understanding. However this interpretation is not correct. If Mysticism is interpreted in this way, there would be no difference between Agnosticism and Mysticism. Agnosticism affirms the reality of something but denies the knowledge of it. But in mysticism there is nothing which is mysterious or secret. Mysticism affirms the possibility of not only reality, but also of knowledge of it.

Mysticism involves the faculty of intuition. Though the term intuition in Western Philosophy has various connotations, in religious context, it means the direct experience of ultimate reality or God. William James, an American Philosopher in his work namely, "**Varieties of Religious Experience**", brings out following features of Mysticism.

The foremost characteristic of Mysticism is **certainty**. A Mystic does not have any doubt about his experience. Whatever be others' doubt about the validity of his experience, it does not shake the indubitable character of his experience. Whether others believe or not, a mystic is certain about his experience. For him it is self evident. Personal experience is the sole authority for a mystic. About the validity of mystic experience, Professor Alexander makes this remark, "**It is for the worshiper as much a fact as a green leaf or the Sun as for a dispassionate observer**".

However, Mysticism should not be confused with illusion, mental fabrication or fantasy. A fantasy does not have any objective content. In fantasy, we mistake something to exist where there is nothing. But in Mysticism we see the reality as it is in its natural dimension.

The second characteristic of Mysticism is **immediacy**. A mystic has the direct communication with God. Mind does not come in between the mystic and God. In the words of Professor S.Radhakrishnan, "**Mysticism is the personal encounter with God.**"

Broadly there are three ways of knowing the things, namely Perception, Inference and Immediate experience. In Indian terminology, these can be respectively designated as Pratyaksha, Paroksha and Aparoksha. Pratyaksha involves the function of sense organs. It is a result

of the contact between the sense organ and the sense object. Paroksha is the knowledge based upon Pratyaksha. It involves the medium of mind. It is the way of knowing the things through the medium of mind. It is also called Anumana. Aparoksha involves neither sense organs nor mind. Since it does not involve the sensory role, it is not Pratyaksha. Since to does not involve the medium of mind, it is not Paroksha either. Since it is neither Pratyaksha nor Paroksha it is called Aparoksha. That means Aparoksha is an experience which transcends the realm of sense organs and mind. This is what is meant by the term intuition in religious context. Here, man does not know God. He will have the direct experience of himself as God. It is not a case of knowing God, but it is the case of being God, wherein an aspirant transcends all differences. In Hegelian context, thought and reality become identical in this experience. About this, William James writes as follows:

"The overcoming of all the usual barriers between the individual and the Absolute is the great mystic achievement. In mystic state, we become aware of our oneness with the Absolute. This is the everlasting and triumph mystic tradition hardly altered by difference of claim and creed."

The third characteristic of mystic experience is **transiency.** According to James, this experience does not last for long period. The

duration of this experience is for a few minutes. It may last thirty minutes to the maximum extent. It may or may not repeat again. In case it repeats, it repeats with more intensity and has a deep impact on mystic for the rest of his life. It totally changes his attitude towards life. His life undergoes absolute transformation.

The fourth characteristic of mystic experience is **ineffability** or **inexplicability**. A mystic though sure of his experience, finds it very difficult to describe his experience in terms of ordinary language. In the words of Professor S.Radhakrishnan, "**Ordinary language is too treacherous to communicate mystic experience."** Normally, we describe an object or a thing as a substance having certain features, as a cause or as an effect etc. In other words we categorize an object in terms of substance or quality or cause or effect. However, mystic experience cannot be described in these terms. It cannot described in terms of any logical concept or symbol. Taittiriya Upanishad speaks of ultimate reality as defying the grasp of mind and speech. The influence of mystic experience, is so strong that a mystic has neither power nor desire to analyze it. The best way of communicating mystic experience is silence. Plato in this context makes beautiful remark on ineffable nature of mystic experience as follows:

"**There is no writing of mine on this subject. It is not capable of expression like other branches of study. If I thought, these things could be adequately written down and stated to the world, what finer**

occupation could I have had in life than to write what would be of great service to mankind".

The fifth characteristic of mystic experience usage of **symbols**. Although, mystic experience is ineffable, a mystic does not keep quiet. Words are limited, but still he wants to express his experience in terms of certain symbols which he derives from the local traditions. The language of Mystic is mostly suggestive in nature, which cannot be taken literarily.

The sixth characteristic is that, the mystic experience is characterized by **inward peace, power and joy**. Greeks call this inward peace **Ataraxy**.

The final characteristic is that Mystic experience bears the stamp of **revelation**. That means a mystic cannot get this experience at his will. He does not know how or why it occurs. It occurs sometimes even against his will.

In short Mysticism occupies very important place in religion. That religion doesn't mean Sectarianism is implied in the concept of mysticism. The term religion is derived from the root **re-league** which means reunion. In other words the term religion implies spiritual merger of the soul with God. It is this experience that is given a prime place in the Philosophy of religion. If it all Philosophy should worth its name it

should culminate in mystic experience. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, religion is realization of one's identity with God.

Moksha in different schools of Indian Philosophy

Moksha is a state of freedom from bondage. It is the concept of Moksha that distinguishes Indian Philosophy from Western Philosophy. Excepting Carvaka, all schools in Indian Philosophy accept Moksha as the summum bonum(ultimate goal)of man's life. There may be difference in respect of the concept of Moksha, but all schools accept Moksha as the ultimate goal of man's life. It is a state where the self restores to its normal condition namely Perfection. Here the lower self has completely given place to the higher one. Moksha is thus the ultimate goal to be reached by man and is not the means of attaining any other goal. That means it is an intrinsic value and not the instrumental one. That is the reason why Moksha occupies the last position in the Indian scheme of values. Indians accept four values namely Dharma, Artha ,Kama and Moksha.The acquisition of the last three values should be guided by the first value, namely Dharma. In India the term Purushartha is appropriately used for the term value because value is meaningful only in the context of human being endowed with intelligence. Moksha is regarded as the Parama Purushartha, the highest goal to be attained by man. Now a brief description of different views of Moksha can be given as follows.

Jainism

According to Jainism, the Jiva is surrounded by matter(Ajiva). Thus, its aim is to extricate itself from the clutches of matter. Jainas give a picture of how the process of bondage occurs. First, there is an influx of Karma particles towards the soul. This influx is called Asrava. Then these karmic particles surround the jiva and this process of particles surrounding the jiva is called Bandha or bondage. In this state, the Jiva experiences joy and sorrow. Man's hope of salvation rests on stopping the influx of new Karma. This is possible only by cultivating the three jewels popularly known as **Tri-ratnas**.The discipline begins with the faith in Jaina teachings known as **Samyak Darshana**.This should be supported with right knowledge which is called **Samyak Jnana** and right conduct which is called **Samyak Charitriya**. The stoppage of the flow of new Karma is called **Samvara**. There is also another step wherein the Jiva has to destroy the Karma which is already accumulated in the past. This destruction of the past Karma is called **Nirjara**. With the complete destruction of the Karma, man attains Moksha.Moksha is a state of absolute perfection. Although Jaina denies the existence of God, he retains the Idea of divinity in his concept of Moksha.

Buddhism

Moksha in Buddhism is called Nirvana. The term literally means **becoming cool**. That means Nirvana represents a state in which man’s thirst and desires are completely extinguished. In this state the aggregate

of Nama Rupa disappears once or all. Thus, Buddhistic concept of salvation is unmaking of ourselves. Some have denied that Nirvana as anhilation. According to them, it represents an everlasting existence. Some others have interpreted Nirvana as inexplicable. According to them, the state cannot be predicated in any terms. It cannot even be described as whether it is or is not. According to them, all that the Nirvana means is freedom from suffering. Positive descriptions of Nirvana are irrelevant from practical standpoint. Buddha said that this state of perfection can be attained even when man is alive. This view corresponds to Advaitic concept of Jivan mukti. It is a state where in all the passions have been extinguished and the person enjoys a perfect peace and equanimity. He who has attained this state is called **Arhant** which means worthy or holy.

Nyaya-Vaisheshika

According to Nyaya-Vaisheshika, life is characterized by pleasure and pain. The two are inextricably associated with each other. Pleasure is so uncertain and pain predominates over it. Further, all pleasure transient. According to the system, it lasts only for two instants. Continuous pleasure means continuous effort. Hence, according to the system it is not worth pursuing pleasure. The ideal of life should be Apavarga which is a negative state of escaping from pain and it does not represent the state of positive happiness. This is an eternal state and there is no lapse from that

state once man attains it. The special point of the system is that Moksha is not characterized by consciousness. The way of securing Moksha involves three stages namely formal study of Philosophy under competent teacher, reflection over the teaching of the teacher to get conviction and meditation over this teaching. The first two stages secure only mediate knowledge or what Russell calls knowledge by description. If the mediate knowledge has to be converted into immediate experience, one has to follow the third step namely meditation (Dhyana or Yoga). It is the meditation on the true nature of the self which leads to direct experience of truth. One who has this experience is said to attain Apavarga. But this is possible only when man is dissociated from the physical body. Thus,Nyaya-Vaisheshika does not seem to accept Jivan Mukti. Mukti is possible only when man is totally free from the physical bondage.This is called Videha mukti.

Samkhya

According to Samkhya, man's ideal is attainment of Kaivalya or Apavarga. Kaivalya represensts aloofness from Prakrati. It is the realization of oneself as different from physical body. Again the Samkhyan concept of Moksha is negative in that there is no positive bliss in it. It represents a state of absence of suffering rather than positive bliss. It is a state of pure consciousness .The immediate means of attaining this

state is what is called Viveka. Viveka is nothing but the discrimination between Prakriti and Purusha. This discriminatory knowledge is more than a belief. It is more a practical or direct experience than a theoretical reasoning.

Purva Mimamsa

According to Mimamsaka, Moksha means separation from physical body, the sense organs and the world. Mimamsaka criticizes Advaitic view that the world is sublated (cancelled). According to him, world is real. It continues to exist even after one attains Moksha. In the state of Moksha the relation of the world to self is not necessary. Like Samkhya, Mimamsaka also describes Moksha as negative absence of pain. But some followers of Kumarila maintain that there is bliss in the state of Moksha. According to Prabhakara however, Moksha is characterized by the disappearance of all characteristics of the self namely knowledge, pleasure and pain. Self is not conscious even of itself. In this sense, Mimamsaka resembles Naiyayika. According to Kumarila however, even though the self is divested of all its characteristics, it has the capacity to manifest them in the state of Moksha.

Vedanta

According to Advaita Moksha is not a state to be newly attained because it is the very nature of the self. It is a state of realization of what

has always been man's innate nature. It is not a state of becoming but it is a state of being. An illustration is given in Advaita .A prince is brought up as a hunter from infancy. But when he discovers later that he is of royal blood, that is not a state of becoming .The person has always been a prince but has forgotten that he is a prince. So all that he has to do is to realize that he is a prince. Similarly, in Advaitic concept of Moksha all that is needed is a removal of obstacle that conceals the truth from us. Thus, it is only in an indirect sense that we can speak of attaining Moksha. No new thing is revealed there. Novelty is not in respect of reality, but it is in respect of knowledge of the reality. According to Advaita, Mukti is not the negative state of absence of suffering, but it is the positive state of presence of bliss. This state can be attained while man is with the physical body. This is called Jivanmukti. Although Baudhas, Jainas and Samkhya's accept Jivanmukti like Advaitins, their view of Mukti is quite different from that of Advaita. According to Advaita, the presence of body does not affect man's Jnanitva. During the embodied state, liberated soul appears to be active but is not actually active. All his actions belong to the body and these bodily actions set a model to the other members of the society. This is called Lokasamgraha in Bhagavadgita.

According to Vishishtadvaita and Dvaita, bondage is due to Ignorance. In the state of Ignorance, man forgets that he is different from body and subservient to God .In the state of Mukti, man is totally free from his physical encasement. Moksha represents a state of freedom from gross, subtle and causal body. According to both the systems Mukti in the real sense of the term is possible only when man becomes free from all the three bodies namely gross, subtle and casual. In this respect, the systems differ from Advaitin's doctrine of Jivanmukti. According to these systems, Mukti is impossible so long as man is with the body. This is the doctrine of **Videha Mukti**. In this context, one point is noteworthy. Although liberation is possible only after physical death, the process of Mukti begins when one is with the body. Man starts his Sadhana when he is endowed with the body. This marks the beginning of his liberative process. But the process gets completed only when man is free from physical bondage.

In short, Advaita accepts Jivanmukti, while Vishishtadvaita and Dvaita accept Videha Mukti. The concept of liberation is an invariable contribution to the society. Indian Philosophy infuses spiritual confidence in man by stressing the possibility of man's attainment of a state characterized by peace and absence of suffering. Mukti may be self oriented or God oriented. It may be a pure state of Atman as different

from the physical body or it may be a state of the unity of the self with God. Whatever be the concept of Moksha, that Moksha is without suffering, accepted by all schools of Philosophy both vedic and non-vedic (excepting charvaka).

Moksha Sadhana

Broadly Hinduism recognises three paths of Moksha namely,Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga.These paths are prescribed in accordance with the predominance of one of the three aspects of human personality namely thinking (cogitation), feeling (emotion) and willing (volition). Jnana Yoga is prescribed for the person in whom thinking aspect is predominant. If the person is highly emotional in nature, he is advised to take to the path of devotion. Here, man does not suppress his emotion .On the other hand he retains his emotional element and directs it towards God. Similarly,if willing aspect is predominant, Karma Yoga is prescribed. Thus, the three paths to Moksha namely Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga are prescribed in accordance with the predominance of willing, feeling and thinking aspects of the human being respectively.

Karma Yoga

The best exposition of Karma Yoga can be found in Bhagavad Gita of Mahabharatha. The term Karma has two fold implication in Indian

philosophy. In its ontological implication, it may either mean material particles as in Jainism or movement of an object from one place to another as in Vaisheshika. In its axiological implication, the term Karma means any action done physically and mentally. Infact the term Karma is derived form the Sanskrit root, 'Kri' which means "to do". So whatever is done physically and mentally is Karma. However,the specific significance of the term is that duties attached to different stages of human life. The term 'Yoga' means **applying oneself to**. In other words, Karma Yoga means man's applying himself to his duty in his various capacities. (Further details of Karma yoga from Swami Vivekananda's standpoint would be discussed in this chapter-8).

Bhakti Yoga

The term Bhakti means love. Bhakti Yoga involves an unconditional love towards God. There are certain characteristics of Bhakti.The object of Bhakti should be extra-ordinary namely God. If this object is a ordinary one, it becomes degenerated and it ceases to be Bhakti. In other words, love of God is Bhakti. The second characteristic of Bhakti is concentration. Bhakti not only involves an emotional element but also an element of high concentration. Thirdly, in Bhakti, the aspirant has a feeling of dependency on God. He feels that he is totally dependent upon God for his existence. Shankara in one of his hymns defines Bhakti

as absolute adherence to God just as Ankola seeds attach themselves to their tree,needle sticks to the magnet, a tendril to a tree and a river to the ocean.

Bhagvad Gita classifies four types of Bhaktas. Firstly a person in distress may take refuge with God. He is called an **Arta Bhakta**. Here, the devotee surrenders himself to God purely with the motive to overcoming his distress. Secondly he may devoted to God for the sake of acquiring material prosperity. He is called **Artharthi Bhakta**. Here also, Bhakti is motivated. Thirdly man may be devoted to God for knowing God. Here devotion takes the form of inquiry into the nature of God. He is called **Jijnasu Bhakta**. Finally a person may have realized God and yet may continue to love God. A realized soul loves God not for the sake of getting anything, but for the sake of God himself. This is the best form of devotion because God here instead of becoming an instrument, is a goal. This is a case of loving God for God's sake. Such a person is called **Jnani.** Ramakrishna paramahamsa calls him **Samartha Bhakta**.

In Bhakti, it is not the specific form of God that is important .One can worship God in any form one likes. Secondly, in Bhakti it is not the gender that is important. Everyone can resort to the path of Bhakti irrespective of his gender, caste and creed. Even a wicked man can become great by resorting to the path of Bhakti. An inner transformation

is brought in him so that he becomes spiritually elevated. Thirdly, in Bhakti, what is offered to God is not important. The inner devotion is most important than the object that is offered to God. Even a leaf, flower or water offered with greatest devotion said to make a man blessed. Finally, in Bhakti what type of action done is not important .The action which is not detrimental to the society done with greatest devotion is said to take man to Moksha.

All the above details have been briefed in the Ninth chapter of Bhagvad Gita. In accordance with the varied dispositions of the devotee, Bhakti broadly assumes five forms and these are the different moods of Bhakti which are called Bhavas. The five Bhavas can be described as follows:

In **Shanta Bhava** as the name itself suggests the mood of Bhakti is here characterized by calmness, occasionally blend with fear. This marks the inception in the pilgrimage of Bhakti. Here, Bhakti has not assumed any intensity. It is a stage of Bhakta praising God with fear and respect.

With the deepening of Shanta Bhava, the devotee feels that he is the servant of God. This is called **Dasya Bhava.** God becomes the master and the devotee, a servant always eager to offer the service to Lord. This mood is exemplified in the relation of Rama and Anjenaya. In Dasya Bhava, a devotee totally resigns himself to the service of the Lord,

becoming Lord's instrument. He surrenders himself to God and wants to become God's belonging.

Shanta Bhava was characterized by the moods of fear and respect. In Dasya Bhava, this respect deepened further and the devotee felt that he is the servant of the Lord but in **Sakhya Bhava**, this fear lessens and the lacuna between God and devotee decreases .God becomes the friend of devotee and devotee takes all sorts of lenience with God. With the maturity of devotion God becomes easily accessible to devotee. The relation between Arjuna and Krishna is an example for Sakhya Bhava. We can see this mood of Sakhya Bhava even in Upanishad. Mundakopanishad speaks of Jivatma and Paramatma as two birds which are friends to each other. In Bhagavata, the friendship between Cow boys and Krishna is another instance for Sakhya Bhava.

In first two Bhavas, there was a deep lacuna between God and the devotee. In the third Bhava, this lacuna became decreased so that God became devotee's friend. But in **Vatsalya Bhava** God becomes a child in the hands of the devotee. Here, God is so easily accessible that he almost becomes a doll in devotee's hands. He allows himself to be treated like a child. The relationship between Yashoda and Krisha is an example for Vatsalya Bhava.

The last mood is called **Madhura Bhava** or **Shringara Bhava**. Narada Bhakti Sutra speaks of this Bhava as **Kantasakti**. It is regarded as highest Bhava for two reasons. Firstly this is a mood involving a passionate love between husband and wife. Among all the forms of love, the love between man and women is said to be strongest. This strongest of love is directed towards God. Secondly the practice of Madhura Bhava involves danger in that the sweetness of Love is likely to degenerate itself to Kama or lust.

The love between Radha and Krishan is an example for Madhura Bhava. Meera,Godadevi and Akkamahadevi are examples of Madhura Bhakti. According to Madhura Bhava, God is the only man in the universe. All others are women in relation to God. According to this mood, the criterion of masculinity is omnipotence and mercy. Since God alone is endowed with these characteristics, he alone is Man. Others lack these characteristics and hence they are women. Akkamahadevi a Karnataka mystic says, **"Lingapati Sharana sati Jivasati Devapati"**. That means, for Akkamahadevi Shiva alone is her husband and the Jiva is the wife.

Thus, Bhakti Yoga is the easiest way of attaining liberation. No emotional restraint is required in this path. The only requirement is that all emotions should be directed towards God.

Jnana Yoga

Jnana Yoga is also called Vichara Marga. There are two stages of Jnana namely Para and Apara. Para is equivalent to Mukti. Apara or lower path of knowledge is called Vichara Marga. In this path, the aspirant goes on negating what is not God and ultimately reaches God. After negation, what remains is God and God only. Ramakrishna Paramahansa compares a Jnana Yogin to a thief. A thief in a dark room keeps his hand probably on the table and says, "not this". Then he keeps his hand on the chair and says "not this". He goes on negating like this till his hand touches the treasure box. When he gets the treasure box, all his pursuits come to an end. In the same way, Jnana Yogi goes on negating what is not the self or God. He negates physical body, vital force (Prana), mind, etc as "not this". The moment he realizes his pure self as God, all his spiritual pursuits will come to an end.

According to Upanishads, Jnana Yoga involves three stages namely Shravana, Manana and Nididhyasa. Intent listening of the teachings imparted by Guru is what is called Shravana. Guru is he who has realized the truth as it is and is capable of communicating the truth as it is to the disciple. Reflecting over Guru's teachings so as to get the conviction about Guru's words is Manana. In other words disciple by reflecting over the teachings of the Guru comes to know the absurdity of

the opposite of Guru’s teachings. When the disciple is convinced about Guru's teachings, he starts meditating upon it.This meditation is called Nididhyasa. Success in meditation will lead him to Samadhi which represents the realization of oneself as identitical with God.

Chapter-7

DOCTRINE OF ACTION - SWAMI VIVEKANANDA`S VIEW

Life is full of unexpected situationscharacterised by ups and downs.Accordingly man is faced with the problem of how to manage and tackle with these situations. The prime way of facing such situations is discharging one`s duty irrespective of the nature of consequence. Thus management of life involves doing our duty.

However there is one difficulty here. It is difficult to give one uniform universally accepted definition to the term ‘duty’. Socrates said that knowledge is always through definition. Hence though discussion necessitates the definition of what duty is no universally accepted definition of the term is possible. Because the nature of duty varies from one community to another community and one country to another country. Nay, it also differs within the same community from time to time, situation to situation and one state of life to another.

The ordinary idea of duty is that whatever is done in accordance with the dictates of the conscience is duty. Normally if a man goes out into street and kills another man, he may feel sorry for his act. But if the same person as a soldier in his regiment kills not one but many he is certain to feel himself happy. Henceto give an objectivedefinity to the

term ‘duty’ is a difficulty task. It also implies that it is not the act as such that defines duty.

Swami Vivekananda tackles the problem of duty from subjective angle. According to him there is a subjective side to the term. According to him any action that makes us Godward is duty or good action. Any action that degrades us is evil. Swamiji in this regard gives a spiritual tinge to the concept of action and is on the lines of Gita statement that whatever is done is to be done as an offering to god (ninth chapter). That means that certain acts done with a bad intention tend to brutalize us. Thus it is not objective side of an act that defines an action as duty, but its subjective side in the form of intention that makes an action duty.

Vivekananda further cites Bhagavadgita in explaining what duty is. According to him man`s duty depends upon his station in life. Man`s position and the environment in which he is largely determine the nature of his duty. It is these factors that shape his mental attitude. Therefore diversity in respect of man`s position and environment explain the diversity in his mental attitude. These attitudes in turn shape the nature of his activity. It is the discharge of activities in accordance with once attitude that constitutes duty. If we forget this diversity or difference in man`s attitudefanaticism, intolerance and brutality would prevail in the name of ideals.

Anyway all our works should be done in the sense of duty. Work should become worship. It is only in this worshipful spirit one can do his work as duty. The secret of the philosophy of duty is that the work shall be done with love. Working with worshipful and loving spirit constitutes Yoga. The object of duty is attenuating the lower self, so that the higher self may shine fourth. Swamiji says, "the energies on the lower plane of existence fritter away so that the real self may manifest itself on the higher plane". Work done with such a loving spirit involves continual denial of low desires. It is by limiting selfishness, we open the way to an unlimited expansion of real nature of man.

Thus work becomes duty in the loving spirit. Swamiji states, "duty can never be done smoothly unless man greases its wheels with love". Love shines in freedom. The highest expression of freedom is to forbear. According to swamiji in respect of domestic duties disharmony arises because the relationships are established not on love which is based on freedom,but on attachment based on selfishness.

The first and foremost aspect of duty is chastity. It has to be observed by every person – man or woman. A chaste wife for instance should think of every other man in the society except her own husband as her child. She should develop motherly attitude towards all other man. Such a woman will become so powerful that there cannot be a single

man, however brutal he may be, who will not breathe out an atmosphere of holiness in her presence. Similarly every husband must look upon all womenexcept is own wife as his mother. The mother should think of her children first and then of herself. But it she thinks of herself first, the result would strain in the relationship between parents and children. Swamiji compares such a strained relation to the birds and theiroffsprings. As soon as the offsprings are fledged, they donotrecognise their own parents.

Swamiji quotes the story of Dharmavyadhafrom Mahabharata to illustrate the concept of duty. The story instructs that how the discharge of duties with disinterested love takes man to the highest spiritual eminence. An ascetic with some psychic powers goes for alms to a house. The house wife of that house keeps him waiting for some home. The reason is that she is engaged in some house hold duties. The ascetic impatient at the delay and is about to curse the house wife for the delay. In the mean time she comes and serves him the alms. She also to his surprise chides him that she is not a crow to be burnt in the flame of anger. The ascetic asks her that how could she develop the psychic power of knowing a fact which is absolutely unknown to any except him. The house wife replies that she got that power by discharging her duties without any selfish motive, and also advises him to go to a neigbouring butcher to know about the secrets of duty. When the ascetic visits the

butcher, the butcher already knows as to who sent the ascetic to him. He asks the ascetic to wait for some time, after he finishes his work, he takes the ascetic to his house, attends to his old parents and starts conversing with him. All his talks are consolidating in what is called "Vyadhagita" of Mahabharata. The essence of his teaching is no duty is ugly and impure. **Man`s duty his determined by his circumshance and environment in which he is born.** The butcher says that in the boyhood he learnt trade and then took to this work. But whatever he did, he did it as a duty to keep his parents happy. He is humple enough to express that he is neither a sanyasin nor a yogin engaged in penance in the forest. All intuitive powers come to him by discharging his duty without any attachment.

Swami Vivekananda cites this,to highlight the importance of detachment and selflessness in doing our duty. According to him we have to do our work without thinking anything beyond it. According him duties done with cheerfulness and wholeheartedness and without attachment to modern results will lead us to the highest realization of our pureself. It is the worker who is attached to results who grumbles about the nature of the duty which has fallen upon him. To an unattached worker all duties are equally good. They constitute the efficient instruments to kill selfishness and sensuality rooted in him, enabling him to realize his pure soul. Normally we are used to think very high of ourselves in respect of our work. We attach importance to the nature of

work we are doing. This leads to hierarchy in the society . Hierarchy ruses envy and it kills the kindliness of the heart. A Grumbler feels that all duties are distasteful. Nothing will satisfy him and evertually his whole life is doomed to be failure. Swamiji`s final message goes thus,**"Let us work on, doing our duty irrespective of its nature and consequences. Then only we will the light"**

Duty or Karma – A Theoritical Perspective

Before going to the discussion, we have to know that the term Karma has two-fold implication viz ontological as well as axiological. Ontologically the term may either mean particles of matter(Pudgala) as in Jainism or movement of an object from one place to another, as in Vaisheshika system. Axiologically the term has meaning at two levels viz. Karma as a means and Karma as an end. Karma as a means in the widest sense of the term, signifies any action done physically and mentally. Infact the very term Karma is derived from the root 'Kri' which means 'to do'. So whatever is done physically and mentally is an action. Karma as an end signifies the result of an action done by man. It is in this axiological sense that Swamy Vivekananda takes up the discussion of the topic. We should also remember in this context that Swamy Vivekananda uses the term 'Karma' even in the axiological sense, not in the fatalistic sense, but in the sense of good action.

Now, every action has a motive behind it. Different men work with different motives. But what is required according to Swami Vivekananda is work for work sake. Man should set side selfish motive behind his work. Swami Vivekananda says 'If we wish to help a man, never think what his attitude is towards us'. This however is not an easy task, and it requires a lot of patience, restraint and perseverance. Practicing Karma in this way even for 5 days or even for 5 minutes would generate tremendous power in us, to arouse in us a moral giant like Buddha or a Christ.

Swami Vivekananda gives a beautiful definition to the term 'man'. A real man is a character epitome, a role model to the society. Swami Vivekananda reminds us the Yoga definition of the term god in his definition of man. According to Yoga, God is a special kind of person who has achieved his omniscience by dint of his spiritual sadhana. That means there is no God apart from man. Man can become god by means of the character acquired by good actions. Swami Vivekananda says "Good and bad, misery and happiness, all run towards him and cling around him and out of them, he fashions the mighty stream of tendency called character and throws it outwards. He has the power of drawing in anything and the power of throwing it to the society".

Thus man is great by his Karma. No one can become great unless he earns. Man's Karma shapes his character and the character shapes his will. Men like Buddha and Jesus had gigantic wills. They acquired their wills by persistent work. They were not heroes overnight. Nor did they acquire their wills by hereditary transmission. Swami Vivekananda observes, "if it were so, how could we explain the gulf between a petty king (like Shuddhodhana), who could not, perhaps, have been obeyed by his own servants, and his son (Buddha) whom half a world worships? How could we explain the gulf between a carpenter (Joseph) and his son (Jesus) whom millions of human beings worship as god?" Hence genius is the outcome, not of hereditary transmission, but of **gigantic will** developed as a consequence of man's good actions through ages and ages. This will incessantly grew bigger and bigger until it threw itself on the society in the form of a Buddha or Jesus.

What we call Karma is an aggregate of large number of smaller works. We hear the great noise of waves dashing against the shingle. But the waves comprise millions of minute waves. **Tangible is the sum total of great many minutes.** Similarly Karma is a sum total of a number of small works. It is this sum total that decides man's character. That means that man is not a hero at one time or the other. Even the lowest of human beings becomes hero occasionally. But he alone is great, whose

character is always great. Incidental or occasional heroism is no heroism at all. Steadiness or consistency mark the real heroism.

Thus our personality is determined by our Karma. We are responsible for what we are. If our present is shaped by our past, it certainly follows that our future is moulded by our present. Only thing is that we should understand the modality of work. We need skill, cleverness, dexterity or what Gita calls Kaushala in our action. Normally two dangers are associated with our action. Firstly we tend to be selfish in our work. We are more attached to fruits of action than action as such. Secondly even if we succeed to work without selfishness for some time, there is every possibility of our being overtaken by ego. We are egoistic in our success. Thus desire for fruit and ego are the dangers associated with work. However we have to be active in some way or the other, because we cannot live without any action even for a single moment. We have to work in such a dexterous way as not to be overtaken by these two dangers viz selfishness and ego. Working in that manner is a challenge and also a science. Buddhas and Jesuses became what they were by facing these challenges and thereby becoming scientists. They awakened the tremendous power in themselves which was already inherent in them.

Swamy Vivekananda observes men resorting to two ways of living. Working in the midst of the turmoils of the world is the first way.

Renouncing the world and living in solitude is the second way. One is Pravritti and the other is Nivritti. But each way of living has its own limitation. A man used to turmoiled life cannot stand the life of calmness and quietitude. He becomes impatient and may even become scared. Similarly a man used to solitude cannot adjust himself to this turmoiled world. According to Swamy Vivekananda an ideal man is he who adjusts himself to both the types of living. He will be intensely active in the midst of greatest silence and will enjoy calmness and quietitude in the midst of intense activity of the world. As Gita says, he is a Karmin in Akarma and Akarmin in Karma. In short he works staying in the world without any motive for the sake of the society.

Chapter-8

RELIGION- SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S VIEW

In this chapter an attempt is made to bring out Swami Vivekananda's views on religion. The problem is highly intricate one in the wake of unsavoury incidents happening in the name of religion. Hence a modern man sees irrelevancy in the very religion itself and for him religion is the other word for superstition and irrationality leading to all sorts of social conflicts. Swamiji himself is aware of the problem. According to him no other human motive has deluged the world with blood so much as religion. Similarly no other force has influenced humanity as religion has done. Hence the question is whether we should totally discard religion itself. Or is it possible for us to totally do away with religion? Swamiji's answer to this question is in the negative. According to him religion is so much deeply rooted in man as he cannot discard it all of a sudden. To expect one to give up religion is as good as expecting Ganges to return to its origin and flow in a new path. Both are impossible. Swamiji says, "For good or bad the ideal of Dharma has been flowing in our country continuously from time immemorial. It has pervaded our blood and environment and is vibrating in our nerves".

Now if one cannot do away with religion, this obviously leads to another question as to what religion is and as to what form of it is needed

to man. Swamiji views religion in two ways viz. religion as an end and religion as means. That means according to him religion is both Sadhya and Sadhana. By religion as end he means the Supreme experience or the highest realization of oneself as identical with Supreme self. In short, according to Swamiji **Religion is Realization.**

By religion as means, Swamiji means different paths or sects leading to self-realisation. According to Swamiji there cannot be any single path to self-realisation and any attempt to bring the entire humanity to one sect would be futile. Because one cannot think in the same way as other does. If it were so, there would be no new thought at all. Motion is produced only when two or more forces come into collision. Whirls and eddies occur only in a living stream and not in stagnant water. Similarly it is clash of different thoughts that awakes new thought.

It is in this context Swamiji criticizes religious conversion. Because it tries to suppress man's individuality of thinking. Normally man resorts to two ways while converting one to his own religion. One, the way of savage viz violence and bloodshed. Swamiji quotes in this context a preacher in New York, saying that Fillipinos should be conquered because it is the only way of teaching Christianity to them. The second way is still more terrible viz social ostracism. Both are horrible and irrational. Swamiji says, "If I am a rational man, I should be

glad that others do not think as I do". Thus Swamiji not only affirms the necessity of religion or sect, but also varieties of sects. Because according to him **variation is the sign of life and absence of it the sign of death.** In this regard he thanks God for the existence of many religions and even prays that there would be as many sects as human beings.

However one thing should be remembered. When Swamiji stresses the importance of collision he does not mean physical collision. Diversity according to him should not lead to social conflict. Swamiji is in favour of sects, but he is not in favour of sectarianism. Because sectarianism involves narrow feeling that one's religion is great and that others' are low. Swamiji feels a sense of urgency in eliminating this unwanted and equally dangerous element from religion. Ofcourse every religion has its own book, rituals and mythology. But these are only external encasements in which great thoughts are embedded. Every religion has a soul behind it. For instance renunciation constitutes the soul of Hinduism. Service to downtrodden constitutes the essence of Christianity. Islam emphasizes the spirit of brotherhood. An ideal or universal religion should assimilate all these features within itself. It should include within itself Shankara's Advaita, Ramanuja's Bhakti and Buddha's humanism.

In this context Swamiji's observation on Hinduism and Buddhism may not be out of place. He gives two reasons for misunderstanding

between Hindus and Buddhists. Firstly Hindus did not develop catholic attitude towards Buddhists. Secondly Buddhists themselves did not understand Buddha's teaching properly. According to Swamiji Buddha was a great Vedantin who brought Advaita to masses. He taught no God, but gradually Buddhist converts corrupted his teachings by bringing their own gods and devils to Buddhism. Swamiji compared Hindus and Buddhists to Jesus and Christians. Jesus was a Jew whereas Buddha was a Hindu. Both came to continue the glorious tradition of Sanatana Dharma. Both of them had a constructive purpose of uplifting the downtrodden. But there was one difference. Jews rejected Jesus whereas Hindus included Buddha within their fold and glorified him as an incarnation.

In any case, an ideal religion should include within it the merits of all religions and reject demerits. Broadly it should avoid two things viz weak excitement and superstition. Both are dangerous. But the latter is more dangerous than former. Because excitement is only momentary, but blind superstition eats up the very root of a community. Swamiji calls such religions shop-keeping religions. Here God instead of becoming the goal of man's life, becomes means of man's selfishness.

There are various grades of mind. A philosopher for instance may feel shallowness in external rituals and may like only such things as

appealing to his intellect. A man with aesthetic bent of mind may need a great deal of art in his worship viz colours, flowers, forms, lights etc. A Mohammeden may be against all sorts of idolatries. However each one has a place in religion. An ideal or universal religion must be capable of supplying intellectual strength to a philosopher, marvelous symbolism to a ritualist and imagination to a poet. **Swamiji's watchword is acceptance and not exclusion.** By acceptance he means heartful worshipping of all religions. He does not even relish the word "religious toleration". For, the latter implies accepting wrongness of a religion with great reluctance. It signifies, **"you are wrong, yet I am allowing you to live".** Such a cold acceptance of a religion for the sake of courtesy and rejecting it in mind is according to Swamiji, blasphemy. For no religion in its true spirit can be wrong. All religions represent varied perspectives of approaching the same reality. We look at the reality in accordance with our environment and dispositions, but the reality is same. There is difference in perspective, but not in the thing in itself. The paper can thus be concluded with a great saying of Swamiji.

"We take in all that has been in the past, enjoy the light of the present and open every window of the heart for the future. Salutation to all the prophets of the past, all the great ones of the present and to all that are to come in the future".

Reason and Religion

Religion and Science represent a fight between faith and reason. According to Swami Vivekananda all knowledge of the Vedas, Astronomy, and philosophy, is secondary. That which makes us realize the Brahman is the highest knowledge. Knowledge of the sciences covers, only part of our lives. But the knowledge which religion brings to us is eternal and infinite. Unfortunately religions have many times been looked down, by secular knowledge. There is a reason for this. Many times religions have refused to be justified by the scientific aid. In consequence, we see fights between secular knowledge and religious knowledge all over the world. Religion claims infallible authority as its guide, refusing to listen to anything that secular knowledge has to say on the point. Secular knowledge with its shining instrument of reason, wants to cut to pieces everything religion could bring forward. This fight has been and is still waged in every country. Religions have been again and again defeated, and almost exterminated.

In modern times physical sciences are better equipped now than formerly, and religions have become less and less equipped. Believing certain things because an organized body of priests or one's people want him to believe, because it is written in certain books, the modern man knows to be impossible.

The question is; is there a way out? To put in a more concrete form: Is religion to justify itself by the discoveries of reason, through which every other science justifies itself? Are the same methods of investigation, which we apply to sciences to be applied to the Religion? Vivekananda's answer to this question is in the affirmative. According to him earlier done the better. If a religion is destroyed by scientific investigations, the sooner it goes the bet ter. Swamiji is convinced that its destruction would be the best thing that could happen. All dross will be taken off. But the essential parts of religion will remain as scientific as the conclusions of any other science.

People who deny the of any rationalistic investigation into religion seem to be somewhat to be contradicting themselves. How are the claims of religion to be decided? Certainly not by the books. Because the books, fighting between themselves, cannot be the judges. Decidedly then we have to admit that there is something more universal than these books, something higher than all the ethical codes in the world. Something which we can judge between the strength of inspiration of different religions of the world and that is reason.

Now, the question arises if this light of reason is able to judge religious inspirations at all. If it has not, nothing can resolve hope less fight of books which has been going on through ages. For it means that

all religions are me relies, hopelessly contradictory. According to Swami Vivekananda the proof of religion depends on the truth of the constitution of man, and not on any books, these books are the effects of man's constitution. Man made these books. Swamiji says that we are yet to see the books that made man. According to him reason is the constitution of man and hence we have to appeal to reason in deciding the truth of religious conclusions.

Now what is meant by reason? According to Swamiji explanation of particular by means of general is reason. Here the general is explained by the more general, until we come to the most universal. For instance, we have the Idea of law. If something happens and we believe that it is the effect of such and such a law. That means an incident is explained as a particular of a general mass of occurrences which we designate by the word "Law". Thus in reason the particulars are to be referred to the general, the general to the more general, and at last to the most universal. This last concept, the most universal Swamiji otherwise calls, Existence. Existence is the most universal concept.

For example each one of us, is a particular part of the general concept viz humanity. Further a man, a cat and a dog, are particular parts of a more general concept Viz..Animal. Furthermore man, dog, plant and tree come under the still more general concept Viz. life. Again, all these

living beings along with other nonliving things come under one concept Viz.. Existence. Thus reason means referring the particular to a higher concept. According to Swamiji the mind, has stored up numerous classes of such generalizations. It is full of pigeon-holes where all ideas are grouped together and tries to find out its type in one of these pigeonholes. If it succeeds in this, it is satisfied, and is said to have ‘known' the thing. If it does not succeed it is dissatisfied. Thus according to Swami Vivekananda knowledge more or less amounts to classification of things.

According to another view, knowledge is the result of explanation of a thing which comes from inside and not from outside. Many natural phenomena are attributed by people to unnatural beings. For example the explanation that a ghost dragging down a falling stone. It is an explanation from outside. But the explanation of gravitation is something in the nature of the stone itself. Science wants to explain the things from within from their own nature and not from without. No external agency is required to ex plain what is going on in the universe. A scientist never requires demons, or ghosts, to explain phenomena of the word. This is one of the features of science according to Swamiji. In this respect religions are found wanting and that is why they are crumbling into pieces. There is an ancient theory in religion of a personal deity entirely separate from the universe, who has created the universe out of his will.

This god is also painted as All-merciful. But the question remains how can there be inequalities in the world. A philosopher sees incompatibilities in this to explanation the universe from outside. What is the cause of the universe? Something outside of it? If religions trace this cause to something 'without', then they would be insufficient to explain the phenomena and crumble to pieces.

Another idea connected with this, is the modern law of evolution. The whole meaning of evolution is simply that the nature of a thing is reproduced. The effect is nothing but the cause in another from. All potentialities of the effect are present in the cause. Form The whole creation is only an evolution and not a creation. That means every effect is a reproduction of a preceding cause, change only by the circumstances and thus we need not go outside the universe to seek the causes of these changes. They are within. It is unnecessary to seek for any cause outside. Religion is a failure in this respect. That means religions hold the idea of an extra cosmic deity, explain the universe.

Can there be a religion satisfying these two principles? According to Swamiji the answer is yes. In the first place we have to satisfy the principle of generalizations out of which everything else must come. The primal cause must be the same as the lowest and most distant of its effects. The Brahman of the Vedanta fulfils this condition, because

Brahman is the last generalization to which we can come. It has no attributes but is Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute. Existence, we have seen, is the very ultimate generalization which the human mind can come to. Knowledge does not mean the knowledge in the ordinary sense but the essence. What we see in the universe as the essential unity of things. If modern science is proving anything, it is that we are one-mentally, spiritually and physically. It is wrong to say that we are even 'physically' different. Supposing we are materialists, we shall have to say that the whole universe is simply an ocean of matter of which every individual is a little whirlpool. Masses of matter are coming out as matter again. So also with thought. It is an ocean in which each mind is like a whirlpool coming to a still further generalization. This is the unity from which all have come, and that must essentially be one. This Oneness is the fact that is being proved every day by modern science. But Advaita has already taught essential oneness of thing in the early period. According to it, says Swami Vivekananda, the self is the essence of the universe. Swami Vivekananda quotes Upanishadic saying that he who feels difference from others, even by a hair's breadth, immediately be comes miserable.

Thus Swami Vivekananda feels only the religion of Vedanta can satisfy the demands of the scientific world, by referring it to the highest

generalization. That the explanation of a thing comes from within itself is still more completely satisfied by Vedanta. Because Brahman of the Vedanta, has nothing outside of itself. This has been cited above in that Brahman is in the universe. Swami Vivekananda slips into emotion when he makes this statement.

The sum total of this whole universe is god himself. But god is not matter because matter itself is god perceived by the five senses. Modern physics researchers are tending more and more to demonstrate that what is real is but the finer". Gross is simply appearance. However that may be, according to Swami Vivekananda if any theory of religion can stand the test of modern reasoning, it is only Advaita. Because it fulfils the two requirements of reason. It is the highest generalization, beyond even personality. A generalization ending in the personal God can never be universal. Because a personal God is conceived as all mercifual and all good. But the world is a mixture of both good and bad. "We cut off what we like and generalize that into a personal God "Moreover the idea of a personal God has to carry with it a personal devil. Thus the idea of a personal God is not a true generalization. Hence we have to go beyond, to the impersonal. In that the universe with all its joys and miseries has all come from the impersonal. Both good and evil are different aspects or manifestations of the same thing. They are not two eternally separate and independent things, cut and dried. There can never be a thing which is

good all the time and bad and bad alone. That which is good today may be evil tomorrow. That which is bad today may be good tomorrow. What is good for me may be bad for others. That means like every other thing, there is an evolution in good and evil too. There is something in evolution which we call good at one degree and evil at another.

However accepting Impersonal God does not affect religion. Religion whose content is personal God will be on a better basis. The personal God is strengthened by the impersonal. Swami Vivekananda feels that an entity which stands separate from and creates the universe out of nothing' cannot be logically proved.

The universe is but the various readings of the same impersonal. If seen through 5 senses, it is called material world. If seen through more than 5 senses it will be seen as 'something else". There are various ideas and these ideas are but the various readings of the same. The personal God is the "highest reading of the impersonal attained to by the human intellect.

Thus in reason, particular is known through general. If this law is applied, all particulars from man to God are only known through the impersonal, the highest generalisation. God is the highest particular where as Brahman is the highest generalisation. Thus God of religion has a place in reason. Religion stands on a sound rational basis.

Chapter-9

CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP ACCORDING TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

On the subject of leadership, never have so many labored so long to say so little. There are as many definitions of leadership in literature as there are commentators, and there are probably more books on leadership than there are real leaders. It is, therefore, difficult to discuss the subject with any modicum of originality, or to avoid clichés entirely. It is like defining "quality", where people would say, "I know it when I see it". What Braque once said about art is also true of leadership: "The thing that matters in art is the part that cannot be explained". Like love, everyone knows leadership exists, but nobody could quite define it. But behavioral scientists and other experts have been determined to come up with a description of what leadership is, and have developed several popular theories and described various styles of leadership.

Peter Northouse, whose Leadership: Theory and Practice is a substantial but user-friendly book, defines leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal". Defining leadership as a "process" means the leadership is relationship-based, not trait-based. This topic will be discussed in the next section in more detail. John Sculley, the ex-CEO of Apple, adds the

important ingredient “vision” that is missing from Northouse’s definition, and says this about leadership: “As I see it, leadership revolves around vision, ideas, direction, and has more to do with inspiring people as to direction and goads than with day to day implementation”. For brevity, we will skip many other such definitions found in the literature. However, the most complete definition, though a little long-winded, comes from Jack Welch, the highly acclaimed ex-CEO of General Electric. This definition will henceforth be used to define a leader. He succinctly defines a leader as:

Someone who can develop a vision of what he or she wants their business, their unit, their activity to do and be.Somebody who is able to articulate to the entire unit what the unit is and gain through a sharing of the discussion- listening and talking an acceptance of that vision. And then relentlessly drive implementation of that vision to a successful conclusion.

Like Sculley’s Welch’s definition also includes the words “vision” and “implementation”, but Welch assigns the responsibility of implementation to the leader, when Sculley does not. The key words here are sharing, listening and talking, and acceptance. For the organization’s short and long-term success, not only should the vision be effectively articulated, but it should also be shared and aspired to by each member of the organization.

Jack Welch does not like the term “manager” because it has come to mean someone who “controls rather than facilitates, complicates rather than simplifies, acts more like a governor than an accelerator”. The traditional definition of manager as “someone who is responsible for the work of other people” has become hopelessly inappropriate according to him. He wants his key people to stop managing and start leading. Hence the term “leader-manager”, meaning a manager who leads. “Manage by creating a vision – and then make sure that your employees run with that vision”, Welch says. The difference between a leader, a leader-manager, and a “good” manager may be just a matter of semantics, and the terms will be used here interchangeably except in specified cases.

In this context, it may be relevant to look at the essential features of “management” (as contrasted with leadership) by Theodore Leavitt of Harvard Business School”

Management consists of the rational assessment of a situation and the systematic selection of goads and purposes (what is to be done?), the systematic development of strategies to achieve these goals; the marshaling of the required resources; the rational design, organization, direction, and control of the activities required to attain the selected purposes; and, finally, the motivating and rewarding of people to do the work.

The emphasis here is on rationality and control – the word "vision" is conspicuous by its absence. A manager is portrayed here as a problem solver. The leader, or leader-manager, creates the vision (a highly desirable future state, what we will be), described the mission (what we will do), and then identifies the critical success factors (what must go right), values (fundamental beliefs), goals, objectives, and finally develops the action plan.

Welch, of course, it talking about business leaders, whose main job is to ensure sustenance and improvement of the bottom line. But the principle applies to leaders in any organization – for profit, non-profit, philanthropic, or even for a spirituality inspired one. By founding the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission (henceforth called RM & RM) organization, whose branches in the West are called Vedanta Societies, Vivekananda personified, word for word, the above definition of a leader laid down by Welch. Quigley, in his book Vision, also claims that "a leader's power is the capacity to translate a vision and supporting values into reality and sustain them". Vivekananda had excess capacity in that arena.

In his appropriately titled book, the Leader-Manager, William Hitt lists four basic traits that appear in all leaders, regardless of organization or country:

- The leaders have clear vision for the organization.
- The leaders have the ability to communicate the vision to others.
- The leaders have the ability to motivate others to work toward the vision.
- The leaders have the ability to "work the system" to get things done.

Hitt prepared the list from the results of a survey conducted to identify common characteristics of leaders across cultures and organizations. The list fits Vivenananda perfectly, just as Welch's definition does. Working the system in his case might have meant approaching things in a pragmatic manner, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the system, in his case the social and cultural system, and cultivating a "stop-not-till-the-goal-is-reached" appeal to mobilize people in getting things done.

While translating his vision into reality, Vivekananda used the modern concept of strategic planning. He set objectives; established goals, policies, and procedures; planned the organizational structure; provided capital and facilities; set standards; established operational plans; provided control information; and finally, recruited, developed, and activated people to carry out the plans of the organization. The direct

and indirect evidences of him doing all these, or getting them done, are scattered throughout this book; more evidences are available in his collected works. According to Marvin Bower, the former Managing Director of McKinsey and Company, a highly reputable management consulting firm, these steps constitute the foundation block for every successful executive's strategic planning system. Capitalizing on his leadership and managerial abilities. Vivekananda had essentially created a global service organization that has been running successfully for over a hundred years, and will continue to run. The organization's operating principles today remain as they were when he had initially framed them. As both a leader and a manager, he excelled in the basic functions of management: establishing a philosophy, planning, organizing, staffing, integrating, and measuring. He deftly interfused "vision thinking" with the modern management model of strategic planning to meet his organizational goals.

Strategic thinking, innovation, and decision making are the three fundamental skills leaders must master. Vivekananda was a leader in the true sense, because he had mastered all three. The leader uses the first skill "to formulate, articulate, communicate, and implement a clear, concise, explicit strategy and vision for the organization". The strategy is very important, because it converts the organization's mission and

objectives into performance. The second skill involves promoting this kind of thinking in others and generating concepts to expand the organization to serve various niches. The third skill is the ability to deal with the day-to-day operational problems and decisions successfully. Vivekananda demonstrated his dexterity in all three skills, although he had delegated the day-to-day operational responsibilities to others because of his busy travel schedule. But his followers always consulted him on major problems, and expected him to make the important decisions.

Pursuing his research on leadership, Warren Bennis, a cofounder of the Indian Institute of Management in Calcutta (IIM-C), India, and presently at the University of Southern California (Los Angeles) as a Distinguished Professor of Business Administration and the Founding Chairman of the university's Leadership Institute, had spent time with 90 successful and effective leaders with proven records of accomplishments 60 from corporations and 30 from the public sector. After observing them for several years and talking to them, he defined four competencies that each of them possessed to some extent: management of attention, management of meaning, management of trust, and management of self. "Management of attention" Bennis describes as the "ability of the leaders to draw others to them" – to make people want to join in with them. This

happens family due to the leaders' intense commitment to their vision. Once people join them, they need to be aligned, and kept in sustained alignment through clear communication – a process Bennis calls "management of meaning". "Management of trust" points to leaders' reliability, or constancy of purpose, which gives people a sense of where the leaders are coming from. Finally, "management of self" refers to the leader knowing his ability and deploying it effectively. Self-awareness is a precursor to that. all four competencies were evident in Vivekananda, and these manifested themselves through various traits and skills he was endowed with. These will be discussed in the next chapter.

It is then no wonder Vivekananda's portrait used to hang on the wall of another Managing Director of McKinsey and Company, a service organization.

Leaders – born or Made?

There used to be two general theories behind the emergence of leaders. One was that leaders were born, and the other was that great events propelled people into leadership roles – "Cometh the hour, cometh the man (or woman)" – as the saying goes. The former viewpoint, however, has been largely replaced by the latter and other emerging viewpoints during the last six decades. The phrase "leaders are born" should not be taken literally; everyone, including the leaders, is born for

that matter. The phrase implies that some people are born to assume leadership roles.

In Vivekananda's case, probably both theories were in play. If we believe in the concepts of predilection and destiny in Hindu philosophy, then we can say leaders are born. They may not show their abilities early because the time isn't ripe. The summons to their calling will eventually make them emerge as leaders.

There is a story that Vivekananda's Master Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886) had a vision of Vivekananda as one of the seven venerable sages who had surpassed even the gods in knowledge, purity, renunciation, and love – and whom he later recognized to have followed him to earth for a specific purpose. The purpose manifested itself when Vivekananda was summoned to his calling through Sri Ramakrishna's comment, "Naren will teach". He then found his harmonic C.

Nevertheless, we cannot totally discard the other theory. The "great even"" in Vivekananda's case would have been his phenomenal success at the Chicago's World's Parliament of Religions in 1893. Indians were then in the slough of despair and despondency. Vivekananda's success in the West awakened them to a sense of the greatness and glory of their ancestral faith, and he was unequivocally accepted as a leader upon his

subsequent return to India in 1897. The tributes he received during his whirlwind lecture tour from Colombo to Almora bear witness to that.

Warren Bennis, a renowned expert on the subject of leadership who was introduced in the previous section, wrote in the foreword to the book Leadership can be Taught by Sharon Daloz Parks:

The illusion is obstinate and enduring: A mortal is seemingly anointed by the gods, typically at the moment of conception, and is stamped with a unique gift that allows him or her to lead others. This person shines irrepressibly, and other mere mortals are compelled to follow.

As prevalent at this notion is, it is demonstrably false, and any person who has seriously studied leadership has found that it is not a predetermined affair. Many of the most significant shapers of history were themselves shaped gradually, not ready to make an impact on the world until time and the crucible of experience had first performed their duties. Leadership can (and often must) be learned by those who would hope to practice it.

It is hard to argue with one of the stalwarts of the contemporary field of leadership studies, but Bennis, despite his spending some time in Vivekananda's birthplace (Calcutta), probably never heard of

Vivekananda, or of Sri Ramakrishna's vision about Vivekananda actually being "anointed by gods" – making it a divine appointment. He agrees that the notion "a leader is born" is prevalent, but declares "it is demonstrably false". That could be true from a certain perspective (more on this later), but Vivekananda and his like were not in Bennis' experimental database. Warren Bennis did not come across a thirty-year old with four thousand years' worth of wisdom, whose duty was mandated by his Master. The thirty year old also performed a few lifetimes of duty in just nine years, and did not need his leadership skills to be "shaped gradually", or honed in a business school.

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In another instance Vivekananda said, "I am persuaded that a leader is not made in one life. He has to be born for it". This statement

was his veiled reference to the theory of reincarnation or, more appropriately, the Law of Karma. Karma means volitional action; any work, action, or thought that produces an effect is called karma. This action with intention could either be physical, or mental. It is the "mental" part that subtly distinguishes "karma" from what we commonly call "work", and the two cannot always be used interchangeably. By calling in sick and staying home when he is completely fit to go to work, one avoids doing the physical work. But he can't escape karma, performed through his mental manipulation leading to the false report. Each one of us is reaping the fruits of our karma performed in this life, or in previous lives. In the above statement, Vivekananda was referring to the impressions (karma) of previous life, or lives, which will mold this life, or fructify in this life. Good karma will bring good results, and vice versa. A born leader may owe his present status to good karma in his past life. A Biblical analogy will be the phrase "As you sow, so shall you reap". Although it has always been the bedrock of one's existence in Eastern philosophy, people in the West are now beginning to get more and more accustomed to the concept of karma, or the law of causation; the word has already been incorporated into their business and social lexicon.

According to Vivekananda, leadership characteristics are innate, and some people are "born leaders" due to their psychological make-up. That is a strong subscription to the so-called "Trait or Great-Man Theory", whose earliest proponent probably was the Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881). In his book on Heroes, Hero Worship, and the Heroic in History, Carlyle discusses the lives of some great men (leaders), who shaped themselves in the world's history, by citing their innate talents, skills, and other attributes. His list of heroes includes names like Mohammed, Martin Luther, Oliver Cromwell and Rousseau; they were born leaders according to him – "sent into the world" to change history. Carlyle's depiction of Martin Luther is intriguing, especially with respect to Vivekananda, because he characterizes him as a reformer rather than a priest. Vivekananda hadn't become Vivekananda during Thomas Carlyle's lifetime.

Trait Theory may have an intuitive appeal, but there are other leadership theories that challenge it. Actually, during Vivekananda's time, Trait Theory was probably the only available theory to predict leadership behavior; this view, with some exceptions held until the 1930s. In an extensive review of the subject in 1948, Stogdill concluded that leaders and non-leaders could not be differentiated based on a consistent set of traits. He re-conceptualized leadership as a relationship between

people in a social situation where personal factors still remain important, but should be considered in the context of the situation at hand. In other words, possessing certain traits may make one a leader in one situation, but not in another. This seems more like a slight variation of "Cometh the hour – cometh the man" idea.

In his highly thought-provoking book The Human Side of Enterprise, Douglas McGregor concluded that leadership is not a property of the individual, but a complex relationship among at least four major variables. He lists those variables as:

- The characteristics of the leader;
- The attitudes, needs, and other personal characteristics of the followers;
- Characteristics of the organization, such as its purpose, its structure, the nature of the tasks to be performed; and
- The social, economic, and political milieu.

This research finding appears to be a compromise between the two arguments, and it also brings "followers" into the equation. The relationship among the variables in Vivekananda's case accurately reflects why he emerged as a leader; the fourth variable was the major driving force behind the emergence.

Vivekananda showed signs of leadership qualities from his childhood. The Life of Swami Vivekananda by His Eastern and Western Disciples (henceforth called the Life) says:

….Naren (young Vivekananda) was the leader among his fellows. Indeed, leadership was innate in him, and very early in life he demonstrated the truth that leadership means self-sacrifice.

The story that follows in the Life shows how the child Naren, oblivious to his own safety, had pulled his companion from under the horse's hooves that could have crushed him. The adage, "morning shows the day", is truly appropriate in his case.

According to Kirkpatrick and Locke, "key leadership traits include: drive (a broad term which includes achievement motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity, and initiative), leadership motivation (the desire to lead but not to seek power as an end in itself), honesty, integrity, self-confidence (which is associated with emotional stability), cognitive ability, and knowledge of the business". Did Vivekananda have these traits? He sure did. We recall what he wrote to his American friend and patron Josephine MacLeod from California: "Behind my work was ambition, behind my love was personality, behind my purity (a composite of chastity and integrity) was fear, behind m guidance the thirst for power". Although he mentioned "thirst for power", he did not seek power

for personal aggrandizement, or as an end in itself; he sought it to influence others' behavior, which he called guidance, to accomplish common goals, but tempered it with emotional maturity and a high degree of self-control. The kind of power he wielded as a leader can be termed" principle-centered power". Stephen Covey explains the term this way:

It (principle-centered power) is based on the power some people have with others because others tend to believe in them and in what they are trying to accomplish. They are trusted. They are respected. They are honored. And they are followed because others want to follow them, want to believe in them and their cause, want to do what the leader wants. This is not blind faith, mindless obedience, or robotic servitude; this is knowledgeable, wholehearted, uninhibited commitment. This is principle-centered power.

With the help of this power, Vivekananda actually intended to produce an effect – that is what leaders do. We know all about his energy, tenacity, honesty, integrity, self-confidence, cognitive ability, and especially, knowledge of the business (material and spiritual service to humanity). We will learn more about these in the next chapter.

There may be a more subtle reason why Vivekananda had consistently emphasized that "a leader is born", as opposed to the modern view that "leadership can be learned or taught". According to him:

All knowledge… secular or spiritual, is in the human mind. In many cases it is not discovered, but remains covered, and when the covering is being slowly taken off, we say, "We are learning", and the advance of knowledge is made by the advance of this process of uncovering… Like fire in a piece of flint, knowledge exists in the mind; suggestion is the friction which brings it out.

"Suggestion", the "friction" that brings out the already existing knowledge, could be interpreted as training, education, observation, experience, or "learning" from any combination of these. Will the "suggestion" work for everybody? The answer is – no! It will depend on the person's capacity, capability, and motivation, or ultimately his power of concentration. Form this point of view, there is actually no conflict between the two views, except that the "process of uncovering" may never take place for some people, or takes place too slowly to be of any consequence. Vivekananda's explanation should, once and for all, end the age-old debate over the two opposing views on leadership: leaders are born, and leadership can be learned (leaders are made). Unfortunately, his explanation of the human learning process, which links the two views, hasn't yet captured the attention of eminent leadership scholars in the United States. This aspect of "learning" will be discussed in a subsequent chapter in more detail in the context of the two opposing views.

Warren Bennis, whose idea on leadership is "more Tolstoyean than Carlylean" according to him, sums up the two opposing views metaphorically:

The leader in Tolstoy's view is just another surfer riding waves of the zeitgeist, albeit the surfer with the biggest board. Carlyle, on the other hand, argues that every institution is the lengthened shadow of a great man. Had he been a Southern Californian, he might have written that great leaders don't just ride waves, they make them.

Vivekananda, incidentally, had visited Southern California and was familiar with the local surf. He undoubtedly made waves-gigantic ones-both in India and abroad, but he didn't live long enough to ride them. His institution, however, has been riding the waves in his wake.

Whatever it is, since Vivekananda said that "a leader is born", we will accept the statement on principle, at least in his unique situation. He probably knew why he was born, and his statement was a reflection of that. If he didn't know that initially, his Master knew and convinced him. That should settle it.

Chapter-10

CONCLUSION

There used to be two general theories behind the emergence of leaders. One was that leaders were born, and the other was that great events propelled people into leadership roles. The former viewpoint, however, has been largely replaced by the latter viewpoint during the last six decades. The phrase "leaders are born" should not be taken literally. Everyone, including the leaders, is born for that matter. The phrase implies that some people are born to assume leadership roles.

In Vivekananda's case, probably both theories were in play. If we believe in the concept of destiny in Indian philosophy, then we can say that leaders are born. They may not show their abilities early because the time is not yet ripe. The summons to their calling will eventually make them emerge as leaders.

There is a story that Vivekananda's Master Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886) had a vision of Vivekananda as one of the seven venerable sages who had surpassed even the gods in knowledge, purity, renunciation, and love, who was born for a specific purpose. The purpose manifested itself when Vivekananda was summoned to his calling through Sri Ramakrishna's comment, "Naren will teach".

Nevertheless, we cannot totally discard the other theory. The “great event” in Vivekananda’s case would have been his phenomenal success at the Chicago’s World’s Parliament of Religions in 1893. Indians were then in the state of despair and despondency. Vivekananda’s success in the West awakened them to a sense of the greatness and glory of their ancestral faith, and he was unequivocally accepted as a leader upon his subsequent return to India in 1897. The tributes he received during his whirlwind lecture tour from Colombo to Almora bear witness to this.

Warren Bennis, a renowned expert on the subject of leadership wrote in the foreword to the book ‘Leadership’ that notion of the born leader is illusion. He redicules that a mortal is anointed by gods, at the very moment of conception and that he is stamped with a unique gift of leading others. According to him this popular notion is demonstrably false. Any person who has seriously studied leadership finds that leadership is not a predetermined affair.

Many of the most significant shapers of history were themselves shaped gradually. They were not ready to make an impact on the world until time and the crucible of experience had first performed their duties. Leadership be learned by those who would hope to practices it.

However, it is hard to argue with one of the stalwarts of the contemporary field of leadership studies. Bennis, despite his spending

some time in Vivekananda's birthplace (Calcutta), probably never heard of Vivekananda, or of Sri Ramakrishna's vision about Vivekananda. He agrees that the notion "a leader is born" is prevalent, but declares "it is demonstrably false". That could be true from a certain perspective. But Vivekananda was not in Bennis' experimental database. Warren Bennis did not come across a thirty-year old with four thousand years' worth of wisdom, whose duty was mandated by his Master. The thirty year old also performed a few lifetimes of duty in just nine years, and did not need his leadership skills to be "shaped gradually", or honed in a business school.

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